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# The sacrifice of the eucharist, and other doctrines of the ...

Charles Brierley  
Garside



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**THE SACRIFICE OF THE EUCHARIST,**  
**ETC.**

**LONDON:**  
**ROBSON AND SONS, PRINTERS, FANCRAE ROAD, N.W.**

THE  
SACRIFICE OF THE EUCHARIST,

AND  
Other Doctrines of the Catholic Church,

EXPLAINED AND VINDICATED.

BY THE  
REV. CHARLES B. GARSIDE, M.A.

---

AUTHOR OF THE 'PROPHET OF SAMARIA'

ERRATA.

- Page 113, 8th line, and that through it, *omit* that.  
„ 135, 7th „ *for* thirteenth *read* fourteenth.  
„ 139, 9th „ from the bottom, *for* a century earlier *read*  
in the third century.  
„ 236, 7th „ *for* impracticable *read* unpractical.  
„ 313, 20th „ „ effective „ affective.  
„ 352, 21st „ „ Hær. Li. „ Hær. Lib. i.

Portman Street and Paternoster Row.

1875.

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# THE SACRIFICE OF THE EUCHARIST.

**B**





## CHAPTER I.

### THE WORDS OF CHRIST TO HIS APOSTLES AT THE INSTITUTION OF THE EUCHARIST.

As the particular object of this Essay is limited to a consideration of the Eucharist in its sacrificial character, it is not my intention to enter with any detailed proof into the question of the Real Presence and Transubstantiation. These doctrines are undoubtedly a necessary basis to that of the Sacrifice, but since they have been treated of with great erudition and copiousness in many English works of controversy, to them, being easily accessible, I beg to refer those of my readers who require a complete exposition of that part of the subject. It will be sufficient for my present purpose to adduce S. Paul in proof that the real Body and Blood of Christ were made present by virtue of the words of our Lord. He declares that the bread which he broke was a 'partaking of the Body of the Lord,' and the chalice a 'communion of the Blood of Christ' (1 Cor. x. 16); also, that those who partook unworthily of *that* bread and *that* chalice were 'guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord,' and did not 'discern the Body of the Lord' (1 Cor. xi. 27-9). He says, moreover, that communicants, although numerically 'many,' become 'one bread—one body' by 'partaking of the Body of the Lord' (1 Cor. x. 17). The whole point of S. Paul's argument would be utterly lost, his parallel unmeaning, and his denunciation aimless, if the real Body and

Blood of Christ were not in the Eucharist. How could any one be justly punished by sickness and death—‘therefore there are many infirm and weak among you, and many sleep’ (1 Cor. xi. 30)—for not discerning an absent Body? How could men be ‘guilty of the Body and Blood of Christ,’ if the *figure* alone of Christ was there, and if that figure was only bread? How also can any one be truly described as *partaking* of the Body and Blood of the Lord, through the reception of the consecrated bread and consecrated chalice, if that bread which ‘is broken,’ and that chalice so communicated, conveys *no* Body and *no* Blood of Christ? The Apostle was inspired, erudite, and not a mocking sophist; and yet, if the Protestant explanation be true, he could not, if he had tried, have used language more calculated to mislead.

There is also great force, taking all the context together, in the expression, ‘The chalice of benediction which *we* bless, is it not the *communion* of the Blood of Christ? and the bread which *we* break, is it not the *partaking* of the Body of the Lord?’ The chalice is called ‘the communion,’ and the bread ‘the partaking of’ Christ; the chalice—that is, the contents of the chalice—and the bread—of which the breaking is the physical mode of distributing it—are so described as if they and Christ were identical: there is no gradation implied or expressed by which, as through a distinct and separate material, access to Christ is obtained; but union with *that* bread and *that* wine is union with Christ’s Body and Blood; therefore, according to the Catholic interpretation, the sacramental bread and wine have been supernaturally changed, so as to have become the substance of Christ’s Body and Blood.

‘He changed water into wine,’ which is akin to blood;

‘does He not deserve that we should believe that He changed wine into His own Blood? . . . . That which seems bread is not bread, even though sensible to the taste, but Christ’s Body; and that which seems wine is not wine, even though the taste will have it so, but Christ’s Blood’ (S. Cyril of Jerusalem, Cat. Mystag. iv.).

‘I rightly believe by faith,’ says S. Gregory of Nyssa, ‘that even now bread, whilst it is sanctified by the Word of God, is transmuted into the Body of God the Word’ (Orat. Cat. c. 37).

‘He walked in His very flesh, and gave it to be eaten for our salvation: now no one eats that flesh unless he has first adored it’ (S. Augustin. in Ps. xcviii. n. 9).

‘I would have God’s Bread of Life, which is the flesh of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. . . I would have God’s draught, His Blood, which is incorruptible, and ever-springing life’ (S. Ignat. ad Rom. n. 7).

Assuming, therefore, that the Body and Blood of Christ became really present at the institution of the Eucharist by our Lord, I proceed to show that He intended this presence to be of a sacrificial nature.

Christ not only offered Himself sacramentally as supernatural food to His Apostles, but He offered Himself also, then and there, in the Eucharistic ordinance, as a Victim presented to God on behalf of mankind. The narrative of S. Luke shows the sacrificial character of the whole action. ‘Taking bread, He gave thanks and brake, and gave to them, saying, This is My Body, *which is given for you*; do this for a commemoration of Me’ (Luke xxii. 19). There is a marked distinction, and one full of significance, between our Lord’s action, ‘He gave to them,’ and His doctrinal instruction about the meaning of that act, ‘This is My Body, which is

given *for you* ;' as much as to say, This Body which I am now giving to you to eat is given *for you* ; it is not food only, but sacrificial food. 'Do this for a commemoration of Me;' as much as to say, Consecrate bread as I have done, and offer it, after My example, changed into My Body, not as food only for yourselves and others hereafter to feed upon, but as a sacrificial food, offered for the world in memory of Me.

The conversation of our Lord with His disciples about the manna confirms strongly the above interpretation. 'I am the Living Bread which cometh down from heaven ; . . . and the bread that I will *give* is My flesh *for* the life of the world' (John vi. 52). He there declares that the hour will come when a certain bread, *which is His flesh*, and which will be in a state enabling it to be taken as external food, an idea which the comparison of it to manna would necessarily suggest, will be '*given for the life of the world*,'—not given merely to the world, but *for its life*. This perfectly harmonises with Christ's words about the Eucharist : '*This is My Body, which is given for you* ;' and also with S. Paul's words : 'The bread which we break, is it not the partaking of the Body of Christ ?' (1 Cor. x. 16.) To break bread is equivalent, in Scriptural language, to giving it as food : 'They knew Him in the breaking of bread' (Luke xxiv. 25) ; and what was meant by this is plain, from the expression referring to the same incident : 'He took bread, and blessed, and brake, and *gave* to them' (v. 30).

Now, as S. Paul is narrating the institution of the Eucharist, and as he cannot be supposed to contradict S. Luke, that bread, therefore, which *he* blessed and brake was *given* in the same sense which Christ intended, when He said, according to S. Luke, 'This is

My Body, which is given for you.' S. Paul, moreover, calls *that* which is thus given 'the Body of Christ:' 'The bread which we break,' *i.e.* give for you, 'is it not the partaking of the Body of Christ?' According to S. Paul, then, the Body of Christ, as it existed in the sacramental state, and was capable of being fed upon by communicants, was broken or given by Him, as a sacrificial oblation on behalf of mankind. But where food is sacrificial, there must be a sacrifice in order to invest it with that character.

The expression 'for you' will show its true meaning very clearly, when we consider the language of Christ in regard to the chalice, where there is a blessing, an oblation, and a giving, to correspond with that of the bread or Body of Christ. 'This is the chalice, the new testament in My Blood, which shall be shed,' or 'is shed,' according to the Protestant version and some ancient *codices* of the Latin Vulgate, '*for you and for many, for the remission of sins*' (Luke xxii. 20).

'For you' is interpreted by the Scripture itself to signify a sacrificial and expiatory action, because the phrase is instantly followed by these other words, '*for the remission of sins.*' That the 'blood' mentioned here does not refer mainly or exclusively to the future physical effusion on the Cross is evident from the Greek version, according to which the words run thus: 'This is the chalice, the new testament in My Blood, which [*chalice*] is being shed' (Luke xxii. 20). The relative 'which' belongs to 'chalice' by necessary grammatical construction. S. Mark does not expressly mention here the word 'chalice,' but he says, 'This is My Blood of the new testament, which is being shed for many.' Now, as S. Luke identified 'the new testament in My Blood' with 'the chalice,' saying, 'the

chalice—the *New Testament*,' and as S. Mark had previously declared that our Lord had taken 'the chalice, giving thanks' (v. 23), he must mean precisely what S. Luke meant, namely—'This is My chalice-Blood, or My New Testament Blood, which is being shed for many.' Our Lord also, by having the visible chalice visibly in His hands, and saying at the same moment, 'Drink ye all of *this*' (Matt. xxvi. 21), unquestionably drew the attention of the Apostles to a Blood which was in that material chalice, and which was shed *then and there* for them by being poured forth, so as to be able to be communicated to them by drinking.

Catholics do not deny, but strongly affirm, that the shedding of the chalice-Blood at the celebration of the first Eucharist had an intended reference to that effusion of the same Blood upon the Cross which was so speedily to follow the Last Supper; but they deny the doctrine which declares, that the *only* sacrificial shedding of the Sacred Blood was that which took place at the Crucifixion. There is no real doctrinal difference of interpretation, whether we follow the Vulgate, and the Catholic English version of it, or the Greek, and the Protestant English version. If we adopt the future tense, and speak of the chalice-Blood as that which '*shall* be shed,' we mean to *include* the fact that the same Blood was also shed really, though mystically, at the celebration of the first Eucharist of Christ. If, on the other hand, we adopt the present tense, and speak of the chalice-Blood as that which was *being* shed at the first Eucharist, we mean also to *include* under the term 'shed' the fact that the very same Blood was to be physically poured out upon the cross. The close union of the two acts of Sacrifice seems to be not obscurely indicated by the words of our Lord, 'Do this

for a commemoration of *Me.*' These words appear to signify, by implication, that the Eucharist was not intended to commemorate merely a single act,—the final act of the Atonement, by death,—as if it were to be regarded abstractedly by itself; but that it is a commemoration of Christ Himself, in His whole Being, Whose separate acts, although varying in time and circumstance, have nevertheless a real and indivisible moral relationship, through the unity of His Personality.

The Apostles could have had no doubt as to the sacrificial import of such expressions as 'this is My Blood of the New Testament' (Matt. xxvi. 28), or 'the New Testament in My Blood' (Luke xxii. 20); for the Apostles were Jews, familiar from their childhood with the connection of idea between blood-shedding, as a solemn ordinance, and sacrifice. This would be the first, and instinctive, impression produced by our Lord's language, unless an explanation were given clearly, and at the same time, by Himself, to show that He was using the phrase 'blood of a testament' in a totally new sense, and one excluding all notion of sacrifice. Of such a cautionary admonition there is not a trace.

The Apostles would remember that when Moses shed sacrificial blood, he said, 'This is the *blood of the covenant*' (Exod. xxiv. 8), and the essential idea of sacrifice would be at once raised again in their minds, by Christ's allusion to *another* shedding of blood in connection with *another covenant*; and this idea would be instantly associated also with the chalice which Christ held in His hands when He said, '*This* is My Blood in the New Testament.' If the words of Moses were sacrificial, so also were those of Christ, Who came to fulfil, in various ways, what Moses could only typify by figure. The Apostles would know from His language that



Christ was offering His Body and Blood in a sacrificial manner; they would however perceive, by their senses, that He was not offering a sacrifice in which there was an actual death, and an actual blood-shedding, like that which took place upon the Cross; and from the words 'Do this for a *commemoration* of Me' they would infer that this present sacrifice was to be also a memorial of another, which, although it had not yet actually occurred, would be a past fact, and commemorated by them as such, whenever they should celebrate the Eucharist in future times.

When both sacrifices had been witnessed, the one would throw an additional light upon the other; 'deep' would 'call on deep.' How clear must have been the insight of the Apostles into the inseparable connection that binds the two together! The institution of the Eucharist and the death on the Cross are to us matters of faith: to the Apostles, the union of the two must have been among the most penetrating facts of their experience. The distance from that 'upper room, furnished,' where the Last Supper was celebrated, to the hill of Calvary was slight, and but a few hours intervened between the moments when our Lord was saying, 'Take, eat; this is My Body; . . . this is My Blood, . . . drink ye all of this,' and the utterance of the cry, 'It is finished.' The same eyes that had seen, and the same ears that had heard Jesus offering Himself as the Victim of Love in the Eucharist, saw and heard Him accomplishing His sacrificial work on the tree of shame: scarcely had the one finished before the other began and ended; so that the Eucharist and the Cross must have seemed to the Apostles only a visible continuation of one mighty act,—two different sides of one ineffable mystery of sacrifice for the love of man.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE WORDS OF CHRIST TO THE SAMARITAN WOMAN.

A REMARKABLE conversation took place between our Lord and a certain Samaritan woman, which contains strong evidence confirmatory of the doctrine that sacrifice was to form an important part of the worship of the kingdom of Christ.

It is related in the fourth chapter of S. John's Gospel. 'Our fathers,' said the woman, 'adored on this mountain, and You say that at Jerusalem is the place where men must adore.' There is no doubt that the adoration spoken of was adoration by external sacrifice. This is certain, (1) from the fact that the mountain referred to was Gerizim, upon which a temple had formerly been built by the Samaritans, and where a rival priesthood to that of the Jews, with sacrificial rites, had been established by Sanballat, by permission of Alexander the Great. This temple, after lasting for 200 years, was destroyed by the Maccabæan, John Hyrcanus, 150 years before the period of the above conversation (Josephus, *Antiq.* xi. 8, 7, and xiii. 9, 1). The nature of their worship had improved, from being at first a gross kind of Paganism, mixed with a faith in the true God, until it assumed a purer form as time went on. They believed in the Pentateuch, and sacrificed annually a passover in their temple; and after its destruction, they always turned, wherever they were, towards Gerizim during their acts of worship. The Samaritan woman, therefore, was thinking of sacrificial worship only when she spoke of adoration. This is confirmed by her contrasting the past Samaritan wor-

ship of her forefathers with that of the Jews in the Temple at Jerusalem, which was sacrificial: 'You say that at Jerusalem is the *place* where men must adore.' The Jews could *pray* anywhere in the world, as could the Samaritans; but sacrifice was restricted to a fixed spot (Deut. xiv. 23-4), as, no doubt, the Samaritan sacrifice had been confined to Gerizim. What is our Lord's reply? Does He correct her essential idea of adoration? Does He tell her that all sacrifice is to be abolished? Certainly not. He takes the same word, as it were, out of her lips, and, without a hint that He attaches to it some other meaning radically contradictory to the main idea represented by it in her mind, He teaches her that the time is fast coming when another adoration shall be introduced into the world, superior to both Samaritan and Jewish. It is to be superior in two important points: (1) In the universality of place; there shall be henceforth no restriction to a particular spot, whether by human will, as in the case of the Samaritans, who had invented a spurious worship of God, in opposition to the more faithful Israelites; or by divine law, as revealed by God to the Jews. 'The hour cometh when you shall neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem adore the Father.' Adoration (*i.e.* as the woman understood the term) by sacrifice shall not cease; it shall continue, but all local privileges shall end; Samaritans and Jews shall henceforth not be rivals on such a question as which is the proper place for sacrifice,—for all parts of the world shall be equally lawful. (2) The new adoration shall be also superior in another and far more important way. All former adorations, whether Jewish or Samaritan, have been necessarily figurative, carnal, and shadowy. God Who has been worshipped hitherto in a carnal mode such as

was adapted to the inferior state of the worshippers, who have had very imperfect ideas of spirituality, and suitable to that period of the world in which they have lived, —the time of twilight, and preparation for the Messias, — shall be, in future, served by an adoration more worthy of the Divine nature.

‘The hour cometh, and now is, when the true adorers shall adore the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father also seeketh such to adore Him. God is a Spirit, and they that adore Him must adore Him in spirit and in truth’ (v. 23-4).

The contrast between the old worship and the new is evidently to be found in the words ‘spirit and truth,’ and not in any such distinction as implies that the new adoration is to be *non-sacrificial* in comparison to the ancient, which was sacrificial. Why should such a fundamental revolution in all the notions of religion, current among Samaritans, Jews, and Pagans alike, be assumed as indicated by the phrase ‘spirit and truth,’ when there is a total absence of anything to confirm this theory? The ‘spirit’ is opposed to the ‘letter:’ as the ‘circumcision of the heart’ is opposed to circumcision ‘in the letter’ (Rom. ii. 29), namely, in the material flesh of the body, and which was typical of the evangelical circumcision by grace and baptism. S. Paul also, in comparing the new with the old ministry, describes one as ‘in the spirit,’ and the other as ‘in the letter’ (2 Cor. iii. 6). ‘God also hath made us ministers of the new testament, not in the letter, but in the spirit.’ The ministration of the spirit is that of righteousness (v. 9), and has taken the place of that of the Mosaic law, which is called the ‘ministration of death’ (v. 7).

The opposition which Christ intended to convey to-

the mind of the Samaritan woman was that which was to exist between the two adorations, and the two places of worship, represented respectively by Samaritans and Jews,—and that which was embodied in the expression ‘spirit and truth.’ According to many commentators, among whom is the profound Toletus, the word ‘truth’ is especially contrasted with the doctrinal falsehood of the Samaritan worship, which was partly idolatrous; for, by the Samaritans, other gods were worshipped besides the God of Israel. Hence, our Lord says to the woman, ‘*You adore that which you know not;*’ and He then immediately implies the superiority of the Jews in this respect,—for identifying Himself, according to His human nature and parentage, with the Jews, He says, ‘*We adore that which we know.*’

The word ‘spirit,’ on the other hand, points most directly to the superiority of the new adoration to that of the Jews, which, although addressed to the true and only God, was material and corporal in comparison with that which was to succeed. It has been also well observed by Toletus, that there was this, amongst other distinctions, between Gentiles and Jews. The Gentiles offered up their sacrifices, not as typical of some future reality, but because they thought they were intrinsically grateful to the deities whom they served. Whereas the Jews, says Toletus, had not been taught to attach any intrinsic value to their immolations of animals, and their other sacrifices, as if the mere external offering could be pleasing to God; ‘for these things were not instituted by God, because they were in themselves pleasing to Him, but as the figure of those things which did please Him;’ so that when the latter arrived, the former ceased, . . . and now the adoration in the Spirit remains’ (Comment. in Joan. iv.). The Jews, however, he re-

marks, always had served God 'in spirit and in truth,' whenever they had done good works of even an external character, such as almsgiving, from a good internal disposition, as faith, grace, and love.

This kind of adoration was not abolished by the Gospel, but perfected by a more perfect faith, more copious grace, and more abundant motives of love.

But when the external sacrifice of the Jew was compared with that of the New Law, the difference was immense: it was not merely that a higher degree of internal perfection was to succeed an inferior degree of the same order, but the sacrifice by type was to be followed, and utterly abolished, by that of the reality; and viewed in this respect, the new sacrifice was pre-eminently the 'spirit,' as opposed to its mere material forerunner—the typical sacrifice.

The adoration, therefore, predicted by Christ, was not such an adoration as excludes external sacrifice, but such as, whilst retaining the character of a sacrifice, shall be worthy of God; it shall not be false, like the Samaritan, for the true God alone shall be adored; and, unlike that of the Jews, it shall be no longer typical, no longer a ministration merely outward like the body, no longer a 'weak and needy element' (Gal. iv. 9), but that very reality itself, which the ceremonial law of Moses could only prefigure and anticipate. Thus the 'true adorers,' according to the above interpretation, which is that of several of the Fathers, are those who shall, under the dispensation of 'grace and truth,' offer to God that sacrifice which shall both exclude all Gentile idolatry, and be transcendently the fulfilment of all the Mosaic law—the substantial truth that has succeeded to the unsubstantial image of the truth. If we interpret the 'Spirit,' as some of the Fathers do

(S. Basil, for instance), as signifying the Holy Ghost, and the 'Truth' as signifying the Son of God (according to the opinion of S. Athanasius), this will not in the least militate with the above exposition. For it is only through the Holy Ghost and the Son of God that Christians are enabled to consecrate and offer the Christian Sacrifice. According to the Catholic doctrine, everything corresponds with singular harmony to the description given by Christ to the Samaritan woman.

We adore by sacrifice *everywhere*, for the Catholic Church offers up her august Oblation throughout the world, without distinction of place, time, or nation: her altars have been in cities and in deserts; on sea even as well as on land; in prisons and over the graves of martyrs in the Catacombs as well as in churches and royal palaces; and the Victim is nothing less than Christ, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, Who, being God as well as Man, can alone render a worship worthy of God, and acceptable from and for man.

'There is a tradition that the martyr Lucian, when in chains, made his own breast serve him as an altar, and celebrated Mass upon it; and we read that Theodoret used the hands of his deacons as an altar for offering up sacrifice' (Benedict XIV. De Sacrif. l. ii. c. i.). The Lucian here mentioned suffered in the Diocletian persecution; and according to the acts of his martyrdom, after consecrating the Holy Eucharist as described, he gave communion to the faithful who were present (Butler, Lives of the Saints, Jan. 7).

Thus, as it has been beautifully said, 'There the Sacraments were celebrated by Christians where, on account of those very Sacraments, they were kept imprisoned' (August. Brevic. Coll. Diei iii. c. xvii.).

Theodoret, who flourished in the early part of the fourth century, relates that he visited a very aged ascetic, who had 'desired for a long time to see the spiritual mystic Sacrifice offered up, and he begged that the oblation of the divine gift might take place where he was. I gladly yielded to him ; and having ordered the sacred vessels to be brought (for they were at no great distance), and using the hands of the deacons instead of an altar, I offered up the mystic and divine and saving Sacrifice' (Hist. Relig. c. xx.).

The Holy Sacrifice was sometimes celebrated even on those lonely columns where the solitaries, called Pillar-saints, lived and prayed. S. Simeon the younger and S. Daniel of Constantinople, who were priests, said Mass on their strange abodes (Dalgairns on Holy Communion, p. 165).

The Protestant interpretation of John iv. 23 is artificial and improbable ; for it is obliged to assume both that Christ led the Samaritan woman on from the universal idea of worship, namely, by sacrifice, to another idea not only essentially inferior to her own, but absolutely inconsistent with and destructive of it ; without giving any hint, however slight or indirect, of this change of meaning in the words used equally by Himself and her. Next, it is also assumed, without a shadow of proof, that an external sacrifice, even such as Catholics hold, cannot be an adoration in spirit 'and in truth.'



## CHAPTER III.

## MELCHISEDECH ; AND THE TEACHING OF S. PAUL.

THE Eucharist is proved to be a sacrifice from the fact that Christ 'is a High Priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedech' (Heb. vi. 20). Melchisedech was, undoubtedly, both in his person and his sacrifice, a type of Christ. He stood alone, without any mention being made of his genealogy, 'without father, without mother ;' he was a king, and a 'king of peace ;' he had no predecessor in his sacrificial office, and no successors, as had the Aaronic priests ; and he united royalty with the priesthood.' Having no lineal predecessor nor successor, he was a type of Him Who was to be from beginning to end complete 'in Himself, and to present an everlasting oblation ; he was superior to Abraham, and foreshadowed Him before Whom all the Levitical priesthood which came out of the loins of Abraham was to disappear. Such being the person, what was it that Melchisedech offered as his characteristic sacrifice ? Bread and wine ; he is represented in Genesis as 'bringing forth bread and wine, *for* he was the priest of the Most High God' (Gen. xiv. 18).

If Christ is in person the substance of what Melchisedech only prefigured ; if moreover the Melchisedechian priesthood is not only to be perfected in Christ, and to supersede the Aaronic, according to S. Paul's argument, but to be 'for ever,' in contradistinction to that which was doomed to disappear, then also the oblation of the true Melchisedech must be as superior to the oblation of the typical Melchisedech as is the person

of the one to the person of the other ; and it must also be offered up ' for ever,' in the Scriptural sense of the term. We know what the substance was that came in place of the typical lamb of the Mosaic dispensation ; it was Christ Himself ; and we can infer, therefore, that nothing less than Christ can be the Sacrifice which is to succeed the figurative bread and wine of the King of Salem, who blessed Abraham. There is but one High Priest of the New Law, Christ Jesus, and but one sacrifice which He offers—*Himself*. But although there is henceforth only one High Priest and one Sacrifice, yet the mode of offering is twofold. Christ offered Himself once only on the Cross in His visible body with blood-shedding and death ; but He offers Himself in a second manner in the Holy Eucharist, not in His visible person, not with blood-shedding and death, and not once only, but under the form of bread and wine, as often as the priests of the New Law, who do not succeed to, but who act for and represent Him, do what He did when He said, ' Do this for a commemoration of Me.' ' Melchisedech, priest of God,' says S. Clement of Alexandria, ' presented wine and bread sanctified, as a figure of the Eucharist' (Strom. iv. 25).

' Melchisedech,' says S. Augustine, ' having borne forth the mystery of the Supper of the Lord, knew how to prefigure His eternal priesthood' (Ep. xciv. ad Innoc.).

' Who is more a priest of the Most High God than Jesus Christ ?' ' Who offered sacrifice to God the Father, and offered the same thing that Melchisedech had offered, bread and wine, that is to say, His own Body and Blood ?' (Cyprian, Ep. lxiii. ad Cæcil.)

So S. Jerome, commenting on the 109th Psalm, says in allusion to the words, ' Thou art a priest for ever' (v. 4) : ' In like manner as Melchisedech

King of Salem offered bread and wine, so Thou also wilt offer Thy own Body and Blood, the *true* bread and the *true* wine.'

In the Canon of the Roman Mass there is a distinct allusion to Melchisedech, in a part which was added by S. Leo, and is therefore as old as the fifth century. The priest in the second prayer after the consecration beseeches God so to deign to accept what he has offered, 'as Thou didst deign to receive the gifts of Thy just servant, Abel, and the sacrifice of our Patriarch Abraham, and that which Thy High Priest Melchisedech offered to Thee, a holy Sacrifice, an immaculate Victim.' 'Since under the former testament, by the testimony of the Apostle Paul, there was no consummation (perfection), on account of the weakness of the Levitical priesthood, it was becoming—for thus God the Father of Mercies ordained it to be—that another Priest should arise, after the order of Melchisedech, our Lord Jesus Christ, Who should be able to consummate and lead to that which is perfect as many as should be sanctified' (Conc. Trid. Sess. xxii. c. i.).

According to the Catholic doctrine everything is intelligible, complete, and harmonious; the divine Melchisedech, 'Whose fulness,' to use S. Augustine's language, 'fulfils the truth of the figure,' offers a sacrifice which reminds us of that of the earthly type, by its outward appearance, and by its adoption of bread and wine as the elements upon which the transmutation operates; whilst the presence of the Body and Blood of Christ Himself is a witness to the arrival of the substance, and its superiority over the shadow. Thus, as on the Cross, the Offerer is worthy of the Oblation, and the Oblation of the Offerer; for 'the Offerer is Himself made the gift of Him Who offers'

(Fulgent. Ep. i. ad Trasim.). There can be no High Priest of the New Law without the Sacrifice of the New Law; the one is inconceivable without the other. But if the Protestant doctrine be followed, there is either no meaning in the words, 'Thou *art* a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedech;' or if so, the reality has not yet come. If there be no Christian Sacrifice, in the true sense of the term, where is the fulfilment in Christianity of the Melchisedechian priesthood of Christ? what has become of that which is '*for ever*'? what were, and are, its results and manifestations?

The Psalmist said: 'Thou art a priest for ever,' because, according to Theophylact, 'the oblation is offered daily through the ministers of God, having Christ the Lord as Pontiff and Sacrifice, Who sanctifies, breaks, and gives Himself for our sake' (in cap. v. Heb.).

If there is not some very deep Christian mystery in the allusion of S. Paul to Christ and Melchisedech, why does he write in the following style: 'of whom [*i.e.* Melchisedech] we have *much to say*, and hard to be intelligibly uttered; because you are become weak to hear?' (Heb. v. 11.) It is also surely not without some special significance, that when Christ is declared to be 'the cause of salvation' 'to all that obey Him,' the Apostle immediately connects salvation with obedience to Christ *in His Melchisedechian office*; for the Christ Whom men are to obey, and thus be saved, is not only He Who was 'consummated' on the Cross, but He Who was 'called by God a high priest, after the order of Melchisedech' (Heb. v. 9-10). We must therefore acknowledge and obey Him as our Eucharistic Priest-Victim and our Eucharistic Saviour.

If the Eucharist is not a sacrifice, then it has no

reference to Melchisedech, the type of Christ ; if it *has* a reference, and yet is only a sacrifice of bread and wine, then it is a mere repetition of Melchisedech's offering : nay, it is even inferior ; for it is not in itself a type, since there is nothing to come after it to which it points and leads, nor can it be the fulfilment of Melchisedech's type, for then it would surpass it.

According to the above theory, Melchisedech's bread and wine reappeared after centuries at the Last Supper, and although being in the very hands of an Incarnate God, and under the breath of those lips which said, 'This is My Body, this is My Blood,' it remained precisely what it had been at first, when in the hands of the merely human, and representative, King of Salem, bread and wine, neither more nor less.

Such is the result of a doctrine which admits that Judaism is abolished, and that the real Melchisedech—Christ—has come, whilst it either denies Him altogether the sacerdotal office, or robs Him of the only victim by the oblation of which that office can be exercised.

#### THE TEACHING OF S. PAUL.

That S. Paul taught that the Eucharist was a sacrifice is evident from his language in the Epistle to the Hebrews. It is important to remember that he is addressing converts from Judaism, to whose minds any word signifying 'altar' would instantly convey the notion of a victim and a sacrifice : besides this, he was anxious to efface thoroughly from their ideas any lingering recollection of the Mosaic sacrifices, which might obscure their faith in the one sacrifice of the Lamb of God, and he would therefore be most extremely careful, *if there were no sacrifice at all in the New Dispensation*, to avoid using any word that might imply its

existence. If, then, S. Paul adopts without a hint of qualification a word that is applied constantly in the Greek version of the Old Testament, made for Jews, to signify real altars as understood by Jews, it is a remarkably strong proof that he held the doctrine of a real sacrifice as a part of Christianity with which he assumes that his readers are acquainted.

‘We have an altar,’ says the Apostle, ‘whereof they have no power to eat who serve the tabernacle’ (Heb. xiii. 10). From S. Paul’s statement we gather the following facts: 1st. The altar referred to is not such an altar as existed once, and then ceased to exist; it is a present altar, accessible, and in habitual use: ‘we have an altar;’ and it is naturally contrasted by the Apostle with the tabernacle, where also the altar was real, accessible, and in the possession and use of those who still clung to the Jewish law. One real altar is compared with another; but if the altar of which S. Paul speaks had been merely a figure of speech, there would have been no similitude in the contrast, and therefore no force in the Apostle’s argument. 2d.\* The word for altar is *θυσιαστήριον*, the same which is used for the Jewish altars in the Septuagint, and by S. John in his symbolic vision of the ‘four corners of the golden altar’ (Apoc. ix. 13, viii. 3). 3d. It is emphatically a Christian altar: ‘we have an altar’—the ‘we’ signifying S. Paul and his fellow Christians in distinction to the Jews. 4th. It is an altar from which food is taken, and therefore sacrificial food. That real external food is meant, corresponding with a real external altar, and not such merely mental nutrition as faith is metaphorically said to supply, is plain, both

\* See chap. v. on the ‘Sacerdotal Language of the New Testament.’

from the argument and from the context. From the argument, because the point is to show, that as the Jews were forbidden to eat of the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the Holy of Holies (Lev. iv. 11, xvi. 27), therefore they, so long as they remained bound by the Mosaic ritual, could not lawfully eat of that Christian Victim Who was the fulfilment of the Mosaic typical victims on which they were forbidden to feed. They could only partake of the Christian Victim, eating its Body and drinking its Blood, by throwing off the Mosaic ordinances, and going out of the camp and tabernacle, that is, by becoming Christians. All this argument would be utterly unmeaning, if the Christian had not a true altar, a true victim, and a true participation of it, by eating.

The context confirms this interpretation: for in the preceding verse the Apostle warns the Hebrew converts against being 'led away with various and strange doctrines' (v. 9); and he twice in the same chapter enjoins them to obey their spiritual rulers (v. 7, 17), whose 'faith' they are to 'follow' (v. 7). What these doctrines were the Apostle does not explain, but clearly they had reference to food: 'it is best that the heart should be established with grace, not with *meats*, which have not profited those who *walk in them*' (v. 9): then comes immediately, without a break of any kind, 'we have an altar, whereof they have no power [right] to eat who serve the tabernacle.' It is known that the Jews believed that there was a fortifying and sanctifying quality in the meats sacrifically offered up to God, according to the law of Moses; and also that there were amongst the converts many who were tempted to combine the legal and superstitious ordinances of

Judaism with Christianity. From the false doctrine about the sacrificial meats of Judaism the Apostle passes at once, by an obvious association of congruous ideas, to contrast this error, in which some 'walk' without any profit to their souls, with two other verities which he implies *will* be profitable to the 'heart'—namely, *grace*, and that *altar* from which those who serve the tabernacle are not allowed to 'eat.' If we hold the Catholic doctrine, that in the Eucharist we 'have an altar;' that upon that altar He through Whom 'grace and truth came' is sacrificially placed; that He is the same Divine Victim Who hung upon the Cross, and Who 'by His own Blood entered once into the Holies, having obtained eternal redemption' (Heb. ix. 12); and that it is an essential privilege and distinctive right of Christians, through grace, that they alone can lawfully 'eat His flesh and drink His Blood,'—then the Apostle's language and reasons in Heb. xiii. are perfectly intelligible, consistent, and sublime.

Suppose, on the other hand, that although writing to Hebrews about an altar, meats, eating, and the service of the tabernacle, he nevertheless secretly intended them to dissociate from their minds the very notion of anything akin to Christian sacrifice and Christian sacrificial food, when he said, 'we have an altar.' And what is the result? An obscurity of language, an irrelevance of illustration, and an apparently illogical process of reasoning which are foreign to such a writer as the great Apostle of both Hebrew and Gentile.

S. Paul's language to the Corinthians is still more explicit upon the sacrificial nature of the Eucharist. He is warning the Christians against eating meat that had been offered in sacrifice to idols; and in order to convince and alarm them, he shows that by this act of



profanation they become partakers of the pagan altar and sacrifice. Throughout the argument he takes for granted—(1) That to partake of a sacrifice offered on an altar is the same thing, in the sight of God, as partaking of the altar itself (1 Cor. x. 18); (2) that to have communion with the sacrifice or altar is to have fellowship with that object of worship to which the sacrifice is offered; (3) that an idolatrous altar is really 'a table of devils,' because it is an altar on which the sacrifice is 'offered to devils, and *not* to God,' and therefore all who partake of that table or altar are 'made partakers with devils.' These are general principles which the Jewish and Gentile converts among the Christians would perfectly understand. How does S. Paul apply them to the particular case in point? What gives to his remonstrance its specific fitness and irresistible force? The admitted contrast between two antagonistic altars and two antagonistic communions, the Christian and the pagan—the 'table of the Lord' and 'the table of devils'—the 'chalice of the Lord' and the 'chalice of devils'—the sacrifice offered to God (for this is implied) and the sacrifice offered '*not* to God.' 'You cannot drink the chalice of the Lord and the chalice of devils; you cannot be partakers of the table of the Lord and of the table of devils' (v. 21). What is this chalice of the Lord? 'The communion of the *Blood of Christ*.' What is this 'partaking of the table of the Lord'? 'The partaking of the *Body of the Lord*' (v. 16). The whole argumentative point of S. Paul's admonition hangs upon the closeness of the analogy between the two kinds of tables and the two kinds of communion. If the table of the Lord is *not* an altar, why then compare it with the table of devils, which *is*? If the chalice of the Lord is not a sacrificial chalice, why then compare it with the chalice

of devils, which is? If the Body of the Lord is not a sacrificial oblation on the table of the Lord, why then compare it with the 'things which heathens sacrifice,' and which are? If there is nothing sacrificial about the Eucharist, why then does S. Paul lead the minds of his readers to this necessary conclusion by linking together phrases which are so identical? For instance, he says: 'The bread which we break, is it not the *partaking* of the Body of Christ? for we, being many, are one bread, all that *partake of that one bread*'—meaning evidently by that 'one bread' the one 'Body of the Lord.' Now that the word 'partaking' has in the Apostle's mind a sacrificial signification is proved by his instantly alluding to another partaking which is undoubtedly sacrificial. 'Behold Israel according to the flesh: are not they that eat of the sacrifices *partakers* of the altar?' (v. 18.) But if to partake of the Jewish altar and of the pagan altar is to partake of a sacrifice, it would be most extraordinary if S. Paul were to draw from these well-known facts an illustration especially meant to rebuke the Corinthian converts in regard to the Eucharistic table, unless it were as truly a sacrificial table as that of the Jews or the heathens to whom he alludes.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### THE PROPHECY OF MALACHIAS.

THUS the New Testament perfectly harmonises with and also throws a strong light upon that prophecy of Malachias (i. 11) which the ancient Fathers and the Church interpret as pointing to the Eucharistic Sacrifice of the

**New Law.** The argument may be briefly summed up in the following heads. God, through the mouth of His prophet, denounces the sacrifices offered up by the Jewish priests; for they present 'polluted bread,' 'blind, lame, and sick' victims. They are therefore to be abolished: 'I will not receive a gift [*i.e.* sacrificial] of your hand' (v. 10). Besides the reason above given for abolishing the Jewish sacrifices, namely, the imperfections both of the oblations and of the offerers, another cause is assigned—the introduction of a new sacrifice. Not only is the old sacrifice to cease, but another is to take its place; and the characteristics of the new sacrifice are superiority to the old (1) in the universality of the people among whom it is to be celebrated; (2) in the universality of the place where it is to be presented to God; and (3) in the purity of the Victim. The prediction, like many others in Scripture, contemplates the future event as already fulfilled; just as what is distant locally is present to the eye which beholds it, so the distant in time is present to the mental vision of the inspired seer, as if it were already real, and it is described as such. 'I will not receive a gift of your hand; for from the rising of the sun even to the going down My name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to My name a clean oblation; for My name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of Hosts' (v. 11). The word 'sacrifice' is translated in the Septuagint and the English Protestant version by 'incense;' but as this means a sacrificial offering by fire, the argument is not affected by the difference of translation.

That there is here a distinct reference to the New Dispensation is evident from the language in the third chapter, which opens with the prediction of the mission

of John the Baptist: 'Behold I send My angel, and he shall prepare the way before My face.' In that day, the 'Angel of the Testament' (*i.e.* Jesus Christ) shall come; and what shall be His office?—to prepare a priesthood, which, in contradistinction to that rejected by God, 'shall offer sacrifices to the Lord in justice,' *i.e.* righteous sacrifices, gifts which God will accept. 'He shall purify the *sons of Levi*, and refine them as gold and silver, and *they* shall offer sacrifices in justice' (iii. 3). The expression 'sons of Levi' is most significative, for the Mosaic priests were taken from the tribe of Levi. In like manner, Isaias prophesied that out of the Gentiles a new priesthood should be chosen: 'I will take of them to be priests and Levites, saith the Lord' (lxvi. 21). According to Malachias, therefore, Christ will abolish the old legal sacrifices and the old order of legal priests; He will break down the narrow circle of the Levitical priesthood as the exclusively sacerdotal race, and the narrow circle of Jerusalem as the exclusively local sphere of their functions; He will open the priesthood to the Gentiles, and the entire world shall be the sole limit to the exercise of that sacred office. There shall also be an oblation both pure in itself, and purely offered, by which the name of God shall be magnified in a way as superior to what was possible under the inferior dispensation as the priesthood and sacrifices will be superior. What can correspond to this prophecy of Malachias so accurately as the Sacrifice of the Eucharist? What oblation can so wonderfully replace the 'polluted bread' and imperfect victims of animals under the Old Law as that by which Christ the Lamb of God 'magnifies the name of the Lord,' by rendering to Him perpetually the highest act of adoration, that of sacrifice; the God-man pre-

senting His atoning humanity to the Blessed Trinity, under the humble appearance of earthly elements,—bread and wine,—and thus manifesting Himself as the real antitype to that symbolical *mincha* or sacrificial gift of corn, flour, or cake mentioned in Leviticus (ii. 1-14), and to which Malachias alludes when prophesying of the Messianic ‘clean oblation’ or *mincha* that shall supersede the Mosaic?

What else can possibly be that new ‘table of the Lord,’ which is not to be ‘contemptible’ (Mal. i. 7), and on which the ‘clean oblation’ shall be everywhere offered, if it be not the Christian altar? It cannot be the actual Sacrifice on the Cross, because (1) that was a bloody and not an unbloody oblation; it was not, in short, a *mincha*, a Hebrew word which is almost always used to denote a gift in sacrifice, and is scarcely ever employed to express the immolation of a living victim. There is but one example,—the offering of Abel (Gen. iv. 4),—where there seems a special reason for both kinds of sacrifice being included in one name (Franzelin. de Euch. p. 330). (2) It was offered by Christ Himself, exclusively in His visible person, in Jerusalem, at one spot alone, and once only in time; whereas, the marks that are to be characteristic of the new and evangelical sacrifice represent it as offered by many, and not by one, throughout the world, and not in a single place; and as perpetual in duration, because they refer to the coming of Christ, and therefore to that period, after which there shall be no other law, nor sacrifice, nor spiritual kingdom, since all that was formerly temporary, figurative, and shadowy was, according to the universal language of the prophets, to be completed, and therefore to end, in Christ.

The new oblation is to be offered by many, and not by

one, because the offerers must correspond with the oblation ; and if that is to be 'among the Gentiles,' and 'from the rising of the sun even to the going down thereof,' the offerers must be many in order to fulfil their office ; the sacrifice is not to be in one place, or only a few places, but 'in every place ;' if, also, the sacrifice is to go on to the end of the kingdom of Christ on the earth, this again requires that there should be not only many priests simultaneously, but many successively, on account of the necessity of death, which will cause the execution of the sacerdotal office to cease in all except Him, the one High Priest and Victim, Who 'dieth no more.' The new priests, therefore, must be catholic, or universal, in place and in time. These distinctions prove, that whatever be the necessary connection between the one bloody, personal, and once-offered sacrifice of Christ and that prophesied of by Malachias,—a question with which I am not at this moment dealing,—the prophet is not speaking of that, but of another oblation, which must therefore find its realisation in circumstances which are not identical with those of Calvary.

As the new oblation is to be offered everywhere, always, and by many, so also it cannot be a mere internal act of the soul ; for the parallel between the rejected and the accepted gift requires the element of a palpable and visible sacrifice : such words as 'altar,' 'table of the Lord,' and 'sacrifice,'—'the sacrifice of Juda and of Jerusalem' (*i.e.* the future Christian Israel) 'shall please the Lord as in the days of old' (iii. 4),—imply an external offering. Neither can this external oblation be *merely* the outward manifestation of prayer and praise, for this was familiar to the Jews during all the period of the true legal sacrifices, and would not require to be predicted as something peculiar to the new

dispensation. The new and 'clean oblation' was to be one offered upon 'a table,' an 'altar;' and therefore in order to correspond antitypically to the old oblation, which was presented by men duly ordained as priests in the technical sense of the term, the new sacrifice must evidently be presented by a new order of men, who are also to be priests in the technical sense of the term, and who will offer to God a real victim. When we consider the words of Malachias, in connection with all that is said in Scripture about Melchisedech, and the nature of his figurative bread and wine, and contrast him with Christ, 'the Priest after the order of Melchisedech,' and *His Bread and Wine*, in the light of the fact that Christ made His Apostles (and in them their legitimate successors) His deputies, so to speak, for ever, in the sacrificial act,—associating them with and under Himself as the visible instruments of His Melchisedechian priesthood,—it is difficult not to see how everything blends perfectly with the Catholic doctrine on the one hand, and how everything seems, on the other hand, forced, inconsistent, and defective, if the Protestant denial of the Eucharist as a sacrifice be adopted as a dogma of Christianity.

The Catholic interpretation of the passage in Malachias is not one adopted in comparatively modern times. It is found as early as the age of Justin Martyr, who flourished in the early part of the second century. 'God,' he says in his Dialogue with Trypho, 'prophecies through Malachias of the sacrifices offered to Him by us Gentiles in every place, that is, of the Bread of the Eucharist, and the Cup of the Eucharist:' it is 'the sacrifice which is celebrated by Christians in every part of the earth.' S. Irenæus, a little later on in the same century, says that Malachias 'taught the new oblation

of the new testament, which the Church, receiving from the Apostles, offers up to God throughout the whole world' (Adv. Hær. lib. iv. c. xvii. n. 5).

S. Jerome, commenting on the words, 'Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedech,' says, 'Our mystery is denoted by the word *order*; not by immolating irrational victims through Aaron, but by the offering up of bread and wine, *that is*, the Body and Blood of the Lord Jesus' (Quæst. Heb. in Genes.). And elsewhere he says that Christ 'represented in the verity of His own Body and Blood what Melchisedech had offered prefiguratively in bread and wine.'

'Thou seekest for a sacrifice among the Jews; thou hast it not according to the order of Aaron, because "he hath turned rivers into a wilderness" (Ps. cvi. 38); thou seekest it according to the order of Melchisedech; amongst them thou findest it not, but throughout the whole world it is celebrated in the Church' (Augustinus, in Ps. cvi. n. 13).

The Council of Trent follows the great stream of patristic tradition when it says of the Mass, 'this is indeed that pure oblation which can be defiled by no unworthiness nor malice of those who offer it, which the Lord, through Malachias, prophesied should be offered up pure in every place to His name, which should be great among the Gentiles' (Sess. xxii. c. i. De Sac. Missæ).

The only ancient ecclesiastical author who interprets the passage of Malachias as referring to a purely spiritual sacrifice is the notorious Theodore of Mopsueste, an arch-heretic of the fourth century, who put forth a creed of which the Fathers of the Fifth General Council said, 'Satan composed this creed' (Klee, *Histoire des Dogmes Chrétiens*, vol. ii. p. 319).



## CHAPTER V.

## SACERDOTAL LANGUAGE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

IF the doctrine of a Sacrifice is really contained in the New Testament, why, it is frequently asked by our opponents, is the word 'priest' never used by the inspired writers? and this omission seems to be considered a fatal flaw in the Catholic argument.

The difficulty can be formidable only to those who expect to find not only every doctrine of Christianity stated clearly and fully in the New Testament, but in the very words that must irresistibly convey the alleged doctrine. As this theory is one which is contradicted by the whole structure of the New Testament, as it ignores the local, temporary, and other varying circumstances under which the component parts were written, and the important place that oral teaching must have occupied in the formation, spread, and progressive instruction, of the early Christian Church, any reasoning based upon it is radically unsound, however plausible it may appear to those who are under the illusion that the first Christians were taught their faith, as modern Protestants are supposed to learn theirs, from the letter of the Scripture only. If the whole of Scripture is deep and full of mysteries; if it is not systematic in its method; if it glances at many things obliquely; is full where you might have expected it to be brief, and scanty and obscure where you would naturally have counted upon copiousness and completeness; if, moreover, there are in the New Testament frequent indications that much instruction was being given to Christian converts through the channels of tradition and

personal intercourse, as evidenced in such passages as the following, 'Hold the traditions which you have learned, whether by our *word* or our epistle' (2 Thess. ii. 14); and 'The rest I will set in order when I come' (1 Cor. xi. 34), the context referring to the Eucharist,—it would not be surprising if there should be a want of explicitness on many points which would be easily understood by the contemporary members of the Church. Even complete silence on some doctrinal matters would be no proof that they were not taught by the Apostles as part of revelation. The whole subject of the principle on which Scripture was written, and the reasons why it seems to ignorant or unreflecting readers to be apparently even opposed to what may be termed the sacramental and ritualistic idea, is treated with surpassing skill and marvellous power, both in reasoning and biblical illustration, although necessarily from an Anglican rather than a Roman stand-point, in an article called 'Scripture and the Creed,' by Dr. Newman, which has been republished from the 83d and 85th 'Tracts of the Times,' in a volume entitled 'Discussions and Arguments.'

To those who recollect the priority in point of time of the living Church to the New Testament, the mere fact that the particular word 'priest' is not found in the latter as applied to the ministers of Christ, is no difficulty whatever. Whether it was used in the oral teaching of the Apostles or not it is impossible to say. If, as we have shown, the doctrine of the Eucharistic sacrifice is to be found in the New Testament, if the Table of the Lord is called by S. Paul an Altar, it follows by a necessary consequence that those who consecrate at that altar must be true sacrificing priests. If the word 'priest' is not in the New Testament, neither is

the word 'Trinity.' 'Yet,' says Dr. Newman, 'is there a more sacred, a more vital doctrine in the circle of the articles of faith than that of the Holy Trinity? . . . . Deny that there is any necessary doctrine, or consent to infer indirectly from Scripture what you at present disbelieve' (ibid. p. 145). 'Why art thou in that excessive slavery to the letter,' says S. Gregory Nazianzen, 'and employest a Judaical wisdom, dwelling upon syllables while letting slip realities?'

The absence of the term 'priest' in the Acts of the Apostles and in the Epistles may have been intentional, in order to avoid the risk of the Christian priesthood, which is so unique in its nature, being confounded with any other kind of priesthood : hence, perhaps, the reason why the word 'altar' is only once used by S. Paul. The Apostle clearly recognises the necessity of adapting his teaching to the varying state of his converts ; he distinguishes those who 'have need of milk' from the perfect who require 'strong meat : ' and this allusion is closely connected with his suggestive yet undeveloped reference to Melchisedech, about whom he had 'much to say' (Heb. v. 10-14), but of which abundance of matter his writings, so far as they have reached us, convey no trace. The principle of 'not casting pearls before swine' (Matt. vii. 6), of 'giving meat in due season' (ibid. xxiv. 45), and of 'not putting new wine into old bottles' (ibid. ix. 17), which was taught first by Jesus Christ Himself, was thoroughly understood by the Apostles, and undoubtedly practised by them and handed down to their successors ; for on no other supposition is it possible to account for the universal prevalence in the early Church of that system of caution and reticence which was adopted towards candidates for admission into the Church, and more par-

ticularly towards unbelieving Jews and Gentiles. Experience and persecution, by showing the danger of the misinterpretation of the highest doctrines by the ignorant or hostile, and of an irreverent curiosity which often ended in the profane caricature of the most sacred rites, intensified the prudential action of the Church, and systematised a course of which the Apostles had sown the seeds and set more or less the example. 'Viewing that early period as a whole, there is on the whole a great secrecy observed in it concerning such doctrines, for instance, as the Trinity and the Eucharist; that is, the early Church did the very thing which I have been supposing Scripture does—conceal high truths. To suppose that Scripture conceals them is not an hypothesis invented to meet the difficulty arising from the fact that they are not on the surface, for the early Church, independent of that alleged difficulty, did herself in her own teaching conceal them' (Discussions and Arguments, p. 195). Again, 'If the early Church had reasons for concealment, it may be that Scripture has the same' (ibid.).

The use or non-use of particular words may depend upon many circumstances, and cannot validly be used as an argument against a truth which is proved by other and positive evidence. The Latin Fathers, for instance, adopted from the beginning the words *ara* and *altare* for the Christian altar, although they were the same terms that the pagans used. Tertullian, in the second century, uses the word *ara* for altar: 'Will not your station be more solemn if you shall have stood also at the altar (*aram*) of God?' (De Orat. c. xiv.) The 'station' refers to certain fasting days when the Christians abstained from food until the evening, and stood praying with their arms extended

like those of a cross. S. Cyprian, in the third century, uses the word *altare*; and sometimes by way of a contrast with the pagan altar, which he calls *ara*: 'As if it were right after the altars (*aras*) of the devil to draw near the altar (*altare*) of God' (Ep. lxiv.)

The Greek Fathers, who held precisely the same doctrine as the Latins about the Christian sacrifice, abstained from those Greek words which were in use amongst pagans as signifying their idolatrous altars, such as *βωμός* and *ἑσχάρα*, and generally spoke of the *θυσιαστήριον*, a term well known to the Jews.

S. Ignatius, who was Bishop of Antioch as early as A.D. 67, speaks in his epistle to the Philadelphians of the 'one altar' (*θυσιαστήριον*) 'as there is one bishop.' S. Gregory of Nyssa, in the fourth century, combines the two expressions 'table' and 'altar': 'This altar (*θυσιαστήριον*), which is only common stone . . . after it is consecrated . . . is a holy table (*τράπεζα ἁγία*), an immaculate altar (*θυσιαστήριον ἄχραντον*).' S. Chrysostom also frequently uses both 'table' and 'altar.' Amongst the various epithets applied by him to the former term are the following: 'fearful,' 'mystical,' 'terrible,' 'spiritual,' 'holy,' 'royal,' 'awful,' 'divine,' &c. (Bingham's *Antiquities of the Christian Church*, b. viii. c. vi. sec. 13, note). Synesius, who flourished in the early part of the fifth century, adopts the pagan word: 'Surely God will not overlook the unbloody altar (*βωμόν*) polluted with the blood of the priest?' (*Catastasis*.) This is probably one of the earliest instances on record of the word *βωμός* being adopted by Greek writers.

If expressions are found in the early apologists whilst defending themselves against the attacks of heathen curiosity and hostility, which taken literally

seem to deny that Christians had any altars, they must be understood in the same sense in which they denied that they had any temples. They addressed their replies not to the words, but to the minds of their interrogators, and said truly that Christians had no temples or altars in the pagan sense of the terms—namely, for false gods, idols, and bloody sacrifices. ‘We do not erect temples to them (*i.e.* the gods); we do not slay victims; we do not pour out libations of wine, nor burn incense’ (Arnobius, *Cont. Gent.* l. vi.). Origen, for instance, affirms that ‘our bodies are the temple of God,’ as if there were no others (*Cont. Celsum*, l. viii.); and yet, in his rebukes of ill-instructed and immoral converts, he says that some of them ‘contribute to the decoration of the *altar*, or the *church*’ (*Hom. x.* in Josue). S. Cyprian, speaking of lapsed Catholics intruding without due penance into the Christian assemblies, says, ‘In that case let the Church give way to the Capitol, and the priests retire and take away the altar of the Lord with them; and let the images and idol-gods with their altars succeed, and take possession of the sanctuary where the sacred and venerable assemblage of our clergy sit’ (*Ep. lv. al. lvi. ad Corn.*). Yet Arnobius, at a later period than this, said that Christians did not build *altaria* or *aras*. These facts show how cautious we should be in arguing merely from language.

Although the term ‘priest,’ *ἱερεύς*, is not found in the New Testament as applied to the consecrators of the Eucharist, yet there are many expressions relating to the Eucharist which are of a sacerdotal character; amongst them I will only mention two. The word ‘do,’ in the connection with which it is used by our Lord in instituting the Holy Eucharist; and by S. Paul

in recording the fact, is, to say the least, most probably a sacrificial expression. The same Greek word which is translated in English 'do,' in the passages that refer to the Eucharist, is to be found no less than thirty-four times in the Septuagint to express undoubted acts of sacrifice; for instance, in the Book of Exodus, it is said, 'Thou shalt *offer* a calf for sin every day for expiation' (xxix. 36): there the word 'offer' is *ποιήσεις*, literally, 'thou shalt *do*.' So in Leviticus: 'Approach to the altar, and offer (Eng. '*do*') sacrifice for thy sin; offer ('*do*') the holocaust' (ix. 7); again, 'Let the children *make* the phase,' 'keep the passover,' Prot. vers. (Numbers ix. 2). As the Paschal Lamb was a sacrificial victim, the 'making' of it implies the offering of it up, as well as the eating of it, both actions being sacrificial. This fact is forgotten by those who endeavour to argue that when our Lord said 'this do,' He only meant 'this eat;' as if the 'eating' excluded the idea of a sacrifice, whereas it is certain that the Paschal service was a sacrifice; and yet our Lord merely says, in regard to that, 'With desire have I desired to *eat* this Pasch with you before I suffer' (Luke xxii. 15).

Some Protestant writers have denied that the Passover was a sacrifice, because they were afraid of the argument that would be drawn from that opinion in favour of the Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist; but Kurtz candidly admits it, and quotes S. Paul's words as decisive: 'Christ our *Pasch* is *sacrificed*' (1 Cor. v. 7). Philo and Josephus only follow the whole stream of Jewish tradition, which declares the Passover to be a sacrifice offered to God. It is distinctly called an '*offering to the Lord*' in Numbers, ix, 7, where we are told that some Israelites, who had contracted legal unclean-

ness, and were thereby rendered unfit for celebrating the Passover, came to Moses and said, 'Why are we kept back that we may not offer in its season the offering to the Lord?'

As the Paschal Lamb was a sacrificial offering, and the feeding upon it was a feast upon a sacrifice, this fact alone is a strong argument in itself for believing that the Eucharist, the Passover of the New Law and the fulfilment of that of the Old, is also a sacrifice and a feast upon a sacrifice. Otherwise there would be an important defect in the correspondence between the type and anti-type. The following is a striking passage from S. Ephraim Syrus, who flourished in the fourth century. After picturing to his imagination how the shepherds at the Nativity brought a sucking-lamb as their offering, he says: 'Fair sight—the lamb offered to the Lamb! The lamb bleated as it was offered before the First-born. It praised the Lamb that had come to set free the flocks and the oxen from sacrifices; yea, that Paschal Lamb Who *handed down and made present* the Passover of the Son' (Rhythm V., Select Works of St. Ephraim, by J. B. Morris, page 32). Commenting also on Exodus xii. 11, in allusion to the Jews 'standing on their feet' to eat, he says that Christians should not receive 'the living Body,' sitting, and that *no stranger shall eat thereof*; that is, no unbaptised person may eat of the Body. S. Athanasius calls the sacrifice of Christ 'a faithful sacrifice which abideth forever' (note, *ibid.*).

It is remarkable that in S. Luke nothing at all is said about 'eating or drinking,' but the words are, 'This is My Body; . . . . this do: . . . . this is the chalice . . . . the new testament in My Blood' (xxii. 19, 20); whilst in S. Matthew and S. Mark the words 'this do' are not to be found.



S. Paul gives the words 'this do,' but he evidently means them to apply to the whole Eucharistic action; he does not, in recording Christ's words, say, 'Take, eat; this eat in remembrance of Me;' but 'this *do*.' So with regard to the chalice, he does not say, 'This chalice is the new testament in My Blood, *drink* ye of it;' but 'This *do* ye, as often as you shall drink, for the commemoration of Me' (1 Cor. xi.). Here the 'doing' is evidently distinguishable as something more than the mere *drinking*, and belongs to the chalice considered in all those sacred relations which it has acquired by consecration.

If the whole essential idea of the Eucharist, in S. Paul's mind, was summed up and exhausted by the conception of it as an eating and drinking of symbolical elements in commemoration of the death of Christ, to the exclusion of a real presence and a sacrifice, his reasoning would be quite unintelligible. If a commemorative feast in honour of a past event, the death of Christ, were all that the Eucharist meant, it would have seemed most natural that the Apostle should have rebuked the Corinthians for neglecting to keep that fact before their mind—in short, for an irreverent thoughtlessness. But what is the real point of his charge? Not that they have omitted, in their Eucharistic eating and drinking, to 'show forth the Lord's death until He come,' but that they have 'not discerned the Lord's Body'—not treated it as something immeasurably different from common food, and that they have therefore been 'guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord.' On the supposition that Christ was really present in the Eucharist, and that the Corinthians were partaking of an ineffably august sacrifice, which had been 'done,' i.e. consecrated and offered up by those who had the power to 'bless'

officially the bread and wine in the name of Christ, as S. Paul had, then the above reasoning would be natural, appropriate, and cogent, whilst, on any other supposition, it would be a strange and extravagantly rhetorical exaggeration of a fault. If by chance a Protestant denier of Christ's personal presence in the Eucharist had never known that the words 'guilty of the Body and Blood' of Christ, 'not discerning the Body of Christ,' were inspired, and part of the written revelation of God, and he had first seen them in some Catholic book on the Blessed Sacrament, would he not have instinctively denounced them as a papistical figment and a corruption of the Gospel? He is not startled at them now, because he is aware that they are in the Word of God; and since they cannot be erased, his only alternative is to dilute and denaturalise their literal meaning by his own unwarranted interpretation; thus drawing from a divine instrument the discord of human error.

There is another expression which is applied to some of the sacred ministers of Christ in the New Testament, and which is of a sacerdotal character.

Christ is undoubtedly represented in His priestly office when He is described as having obtained a 'better ministry' (λειτουργία) (than the Mosaic), by how much also He is a Mediator of a better testament' (Heb. viii. 6). Now the prophets and doctors at Antioch (Acts xiii. 1, 2) are mentioned as having received a revelation from the Holy Ghost about Saul and Barnabas; they are described as 'ministering to the Lord and fasting,' not ministering to their brethren, but 'to the Lord;' and the word here used is precisely the same as that applied to our Lord in the above passage from the Epistle to the Hebrews; so also S. Paul designates himself as a minister (λειτουργόν) of Christ (Rom. xv. 16).

The peculiar sacerdotal force of many expressions in the New Testament, which is entirely lost in the English version, is pointed out with conciseness in an able article by Monsig. Patterson upon 'The sacrificial Words used by S. Paul,' published in the second series of 'Essays on Religion and Literature.' There are some suggestive remarks also by the late Mr. Froude, on the same subject, in his article upon 'The Church System under the Apostles, as exhibited in Scripture' (Remains, vol. iii.).

It is interesting, in connection with the sacerdotal character of the ministers of Christ under the New Law, to remember that through an epistle from Polycrates, Bishop of Ephesus, to Pope Victor, at the end of the second century, we learn that S. John used to wear a golden plate on his forehead and a linen tunic, like the Aaronic high priests of old (Euseb. Hist. l. v. c. xxiv.); and S. James wore a similar ornament, according to S. Clement of Alexandria (Epiphanius, Hæres. xxix. n. 2).

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## CHAPTER VI.

### THE SACRIFICE ON THE CROSS, AND THE SACRIFICE OF THE ALTAR.

ONE of the most frequent and serious misconceptions which prevails amongst those who reject the Catholic doctrine of the Sacrifice arises from a belief that it is utterly incompatible with a revealed fact which is of the very essence of Christianity. If Christ, they say, was offered once (Heb. ix. 28), how can He be offered again, and not once only, but frequently and even daily upon the Catholic altars? If by 'one oblation He *has* per-

fectured for ever them that are sanctified' (x. 14), why is another oblation required as though the first which was upon Calvary were imperfect and needed repetition, like the sacrifices of the Jewish law? If after the sins of the whole world were remitted by the Blood of the Mediator, so that 'there is no more an oblation for sin' (x. 18), 'no sacrifice for sins left, but only a certain dreadful expectation of judgment' (x. 26, 27) for those who do not profit by the 'one oblation,' why then is *another* sacrifice, propitiatory for sin, declared to be necessary upon earth, and affirmed by Catholics to be actually offered up by priests appointed for that purpose?

These questions express the pith of the Protestant argument, and derive their whole force from a confusion of mind, in those who put such interrogatories, as to the meaning of S. Paul's language in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and as to the distinction most clear and important which exists between the two sacrifices—of Calvary and the Christian altar. The error arises from not considering precisely the purpose of S. Paul's remarks about the 'one oblation,' and then from transferring those ideas which are intended to apply solely to the kind of sacrifice which the Apostle had before his mind, to another kind, which although closely connected with, and indeed dependent upon, the first, is yet distinct from it in many respects, and was certainly *not* the immediate object of the Apostle's teaching in the passages before mentioned.

What is S. Paul engaged in showing? He is proving to the Jews the superiority of the sacrifice of Christ over all those of the old dispensation; and he does this by contrasting their differences in such a striking way as to leave no room for doubt in the mind of any Jew

(if he believed S. Paul's words) that the sacrifice of Christ was immeasurably more excellent than any and all of the Mosaic covenant.

To understand S. Paul well it is necessary to explain the general principles of the Jewish sacrificial system. There were two classes of sacrifices amongst the Jews, those of animals and those of the vegetable kingdom. The first was the highest in rank, and the second was secondary and subsidiary to the first; the first could be offered alone, but the second was preceded by the first, and was regarded as their accompaniment and supplement. Without entering on the large question of the nature of the Mosaic sacrifices, it will be sufficient to observe, that there were strong reasons for the distinction of rank between the two classes of oblations. One of the chief purposes of sacrifice was to represent to God, on the part of the offerers, their acknowledgment of Him as their Creator, their sense of guiltiness and need of reconciliation, their gratefulness for His past kindness, and their dependence on Him for all things, as shown by their supplications for future blessings. Their self-dedication was symbolised most evidently by their offering up the lives of animals, because the living organism had a similarity to the animal part of their own human nature; and since domestic animals only were allowed, such as oxen, goats, and sheep, which had occupied their attentive care, the Israelites might be said to have stamped them with some reflection of their own personality; they were substantial fruits of their own energy, and in a certain sense part of themselves, as being their own property. The life of the animal, therefore, which was presented to God through the effusion of its blood on the altar, which was its visible life poured forth, was an

apt emblem of the dedication to God of the soul and body of the offerers.

There was also a special reason why the sacrifice of animals held the highest position in the order of oblations: their blood was solemnly accepted by God as a penal substitute for the souls of the people; 'because the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you that you may make atonement with it upon the altar for your souls, and the blood may be for an expiation of the soul' (Lev. xvii. 11). As this symbolical life was to be entirely given up to God, the people were never allowed to partake of it; that act would have amounted to a fellowship with God, of which they were incapable until the all-perfect Victim had offered His life; it also fixed their minds perpetually on the intimate and mysterious connection that there was between sin and the necessity of its expiation by blood: 'No soul of you, nor of the strangers that sojourn among you, shall eat blood' (Lev. xvii. 12). The living animal, although irrational, was also a more fitting type of the future Christ than things without life, for it had something in its nature akin to man, through its sensitive constitution with its strangely similar emotions of pain and pleasure, and its conscious dependence on and familiarity with man. Besides this, the incapacity to sin in a creature which was so much linked with the daily life of men was an appropriate substitute for that innocence which was required in a vicarious victim. For the same reason no 'unclean' animal was allowed to be placed on the altar.

It has also been acutely remarked by Kurtz, in his work on sacrifice, that all animals that were permissible for altar use were edible, and by thus aiding in the nutrition of the human frame they contributed to form

and sustain its substance, and so had a peculiarly close relationship with the living personality of the sacrificers (Sacrif. Worship of O. Test. b. ii. c. i. s. 34).

The vegetable altar-offerings were also edible, and supplied vital force to man. They, too, were strictly limited to such as depended more or less on his co-operation, in order that they might, like the sacrificial animals, represent his diligence and toil; as, for instance, corn, oil, and wine, the first of which was never used in sacrifice except after being roasted when in the ear, or made into flour or dough, and the last were clearly the result of labour, olives and grapes never being offered in their natural state.

The destruction, by sacrifice, of the animal and vegetable oblations had therefore a double symbolism; it was a visible representative recognition by the Israelite of the supreme sovereignty of God, and of his own nothingness and need of power; and it also was to him a typical pledge and foreshadowing of One Who should be hereafter an all-atoning expiation, not for the Israelite only, but for the entire race of man.

It is with these sacrifices of the Old Law that S. Paul compares the sacrifice of Christ. He does not compare His with the second class of sacrifices, but with the first; for if the sacrifice of Christ was superior in every respect to the blood-offerings of the Jews, which held the highest rank as sacrifices, there was no occasion to contrast it with the lesser and unbloody offerings of corn, oil, and wine. S. Paul therefore, in those well-known passages from the Epistle to the Hebrews which are so often quoted against the doctrine of a sacrifice, has before his mind the question of *blood-offerings only*—those of the Jewish Law on the one side, and that of Christ on the other. Whatever language he uses must

be restricted to this point of view; every sacrificial word, such as 'oblation,' 'ministry,' 'mediator,' 'blood,' and the like, must be interpreted by the one key-note which determines the tone and order of the whole argument of the Apostle. Whatever other and additional truths he held and taught about Christ, he is not teaching them *here*; and to extend words that were meant to establish one particular point, to another, which was not within the immediate scope of his reasoning, is to pervert the very language of inspiration and make it the unauthorised vehicle of human inventions.

Christ was superior to the numerous victims of the Jews, because that which they, although many, failed to effect, He accomplished by offering one Victim, Himself. In the Old Law, the very repetition of the sacrifices was a perpetual confession that none was sufficient 'to take away sins:' for why should there have been many if any one had been able to redeem man? But 'this man, offering *one* sacrifice for sins, for ever sitteth on the right hand of God' (Heb. x. 12); 'by *one* oblation He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified' (ibid. 14). 'We are sanctified by the oblation of the body of Jesus Christ' (ibid. 10).

What contradiction is there in this statement to the doctrine of the Sacrifice of the Altar, or the Mass,\* as it is called?

\* The Eucharistic Sacrifice is called in English the Mass, from the Latin *missa*, a contracted form of *missio*, which signifies a dismissal, or permission to depart after the sacrifice is ended. The English word Mass dates from the reintroduction of Christianity in the sixth century under S. Gregory the Great. The Latin term was in use in the second century; it occurs in a letter of Pius I., addressed A.D. 166 to the Bishop of Vienne. The expression there, is, *Missas agimus*. Pope Cornelius, A.D. 254, says that on account of the severity of the persecution Christians could not celebrate Mass (*Missas*) in those catacombs that were well known (Epist. ad Lupercinum). The



There is one Victim for sin, says S. Paul, and one only, Jesus Christ; and since that is sufficient for the whole world, there is and can be no other for eternity.

‘By one oblation;’ wherefore, says S. Thomas Aquinas, ‘He sits as Lord, and is not as if He were a minister, like the legal priest; because the latter did not take away sins by one victim, and therefore he had to offer many and often; . . . but the Victim which Christ offered takes away sins. He has perfected by one oblation that which He has made, by reconciling and joining us to God as our beginning (*principio*): sanctified for ever; because the Victim offered by Christ, Who is both God and Man, has an everlasting power of sanctifying’ (Comm. in Heb. x. 14).

What other Victim of Redemption except Christ do we recognise in the sacrifice of the Altar—what other do we expect? None. ‘In this divine sacrifice which is effected in the Mass, that *same* Christ is contained and bloodlessly immolated Who offered Himself once upon the Cross bloodily’ (Conc. Trid. Sess. xxii. c. ii.).

But, it is objected, S. Paul does not merely say there is only one Victim; that is, one in number, one individual sacrifice, contrasted with others which are

plural number, *Missa*, arose from the very ancient custom of formerly having two dismissals or *missiones*: the first, when after the Gospel and sermon the catechumens, penitents, and unbelievers were ordered to withdraw; and the second, when all the initiated faithful were dismissed at the conclusion of the whole service with the words still retained in the Latin Liturgy—*Ite, missa est*—‘Go, it is the dismissal;’ and in Greek, ἀπολύεσθε and προέλθετε. Thus there were originally the *Missa Catechumenorum* and the *Missa Fidelium*, corresponding with the two portions of the one sacred service. Hence the frequent use of the expression, *Missas facere*, *Missarum solemnia*, to signify the celebration of even a single Mass. See Rock’s *Hierurgia*, vol. i. p. 297-304, and Benedict XIV. De Sac. Miss. lib. ii. c. i.

many in number; he declares that there was also only one *oblation* of the one Victim, *i.e.* one *act* of sacrifice, one *presentation* of the saving Blood. 'Once He hath appeared for the destruction of sin by the sacrifice of Himself; and as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment, so also Christ was offered once to exhaust the sins of many' (Heb. ix. 26-28). 'By His own Blood [He] entered once into the holies' (ibid. 12). Where, we ask again, is there in this statement any contradiction to the Mass? The oblation which S. Paul says was made once only is the oblation by death: it is that which, beginning with the Incarnation, was perfected by blood-shedding. All the Apostle's reasoning, allusions, and illustrations revolve, so to speak, round this fact as their central idea. What he means by 'once' will be seen by what he means by the word 'often' with which the 'once' is compared. 'Nor yet that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holies every year with the *blood* of others: for then He ought to have *suffered often* from the beginning of the world' (ix. 25, 26).

Each separate offering by the high priest every year was accomplished by the distinct blood-shedding of victims numerically distinct from each other; therefore as the same victims could only die once to furnish the expiatory blood, so many sacrifices meant so many different victims, and also so many separate oblations of their blood. But the one Christ was only one Victim, and as He did not rise from the tomb to die again, for 'in that He died He died once,' so His blood-shedding by death corresponded with the unity of His person as a Victim. The blood-sheddings of the Old Law were many, because the victims were many: that of Christ was one, because He was the all-sufficient

and only Victim of salvation. S. Paul, therefore, affirms that Christ offered Himself only once by *suffering, blood-shedding, and death*; there was one 'oblation of the Body of Jesus Christ once' (x. 10), as compared to the oblation of the bodies of animal victims; and as those were made by a real physical destruction of their animal life, that oblation of Christ's Body which took place on the Cross was never repeated: once only 'He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried,' as the Creed declares.

Is there anything in the Mass which implies the contrary? So far from it, the Mass is a perpetual witness to the fact of that single death: it is one of the most striking attestations of that historical, as well as dogmatical, truth of the Christian faith, that Christ died for the world; it is the prolonged echo of the mighty words, 'It is finished;' it is the perpetually visible link of every generation of the Church with that which in the persons of the first disciples stood around Calvary, as before they had sat at the Paschal table with the Lord. What can be a more conspicuous testimony to the one death of the one Victim than that august rite which, instituted by Christ Himself, 'shows forth the Lord's death till He come'—that death without which it would have had neither a meaning nor an existence?

The offering to which S. Paul alludes as having been made once, and which, therefore, can never be repeated, is also characterised by another feature besides that of immolation by death. It was made in order to 'obtain eternal redemption,' 'to cleanse our consciences from dead works,' to preserve for us an 'eternal inheritance,' an entrance into heaven by 'a new and living way,' 'sanctification,' 'the destruction of sin,' and 'the

exhaustion of the sins of many' (Heb. ix.). It was 'once' made, not only numerically, but in the sense of perfection; it required no addition of the same kind; in a word, it was made to accomplish and seal the whole scheme of divine mercy towards man.

That sacrifice which was once offered by death, and with the above-mentioned objects and fulfilment, can never be repeated, because to repeat it would be to deny its sufficiency for the purpose intended: it would be to place it in the rank of the old sacrifices which it had abolished by its superior perfection. By the sacrifice on the Cross, once offered, the price of the redemption of the fallen race of man was more than adequately paid; obedience and satisfaction of an infinite value were rendered to and accepted by God, in behalf of the whole world of sinners, past, present, and future; peace was restored between heaven and earth; no other victim than Christ, no other sacrifice of redemption, no new satisfaction of expiation, no new merit on the part of Christ, was required or possible, for infinity of value cannot be increased. Christ by that one oblation opened a fountain of inexhaustible grace for the salvation of man, so that whatever means of pardon, fellowship with God, and eternal life, are available for the reparation of the Fall in each individual man, are entirely owing to the bloody sacrifice once offered on the Cross. What contradiction is there in the Mass to this fundamental doctrine of Christianity and of the Catholic Church? Do we say that Christ is offered in the Mass *because* the sacrifice on Calvary was incomplete on the part of the God-man? Do we say that not enough satisfaction and adoration were rendered by Him to God when He breathed His last breath, or that the precious Blood was unequal to cleanse the sins of

the world? Do we say that the Mass is the original cause of redeeming grace and the original treasury of infinite merit, and the original fountain of the Sacraments?

On the contrary, the chief purpose of the Mass is to *apply practically* to the souls of men those benefits which the sacrifice of the Cross had, so far as it depended upon God, already procured: it is a channel of the effects of redemption, not the spring-head: it is not a sacrifice distinct from that of the Cross, and additional to it, as the different victims and sacrifices of the Old Law were independent of, and additional to, each other, but it is a renewal and repetition of the 'once offered' oblation, by being a renewed and repeated sacrificial presentation of the same victim, in another and unbloody manner.

'Christ,' says S. Augustine, 'was once offered in Himself' (meaning on the Cross), 'and nevertheless He is immolated in a mystery every day for the people' (Ep. xviii. n. 9, ad Bonif.).

We have seen in what sense S. Paul declares that Christ has been 'once' offered: he excludes the bloody offering of Christ as our Redeemer from the possibility of repetition; there can be no more sacrificial acts of that kind; the first was the last. He also excludes from the class of efficacious victims all except the Lamb of God. Now, as his words must be taken in the precise sense in which he intended them to be taken, and in no other, it is evident to demonstration that they do not convey even a shadow of condemnation of the doctrine of the Mass: they neither contradict and clash with it, nor touch even the remotest fringe of the question in an antagonistic manner. There is but one Victim offered in the Mass, Christ Jesus, 'yester-

day, and to-day, and the same for ever' (Heb. xiii. 8); neither is He *really* slain there, nor is He offered to God there, as a ransom for the sins of the world; because both these deeds were consummated on the Cross, and do not again take place in the Mass.

It may be useful to notice here a text which is frequently cited from the Acts of the Apostles, as confirmatory of the argument drawn from the Epistle to the Hebrews against the Mass. Christ, it is said, has not only 'passed into the heavens,' but S. Peter has declared that He would never leave that abode until the last day: 'Whom heaven indeed must *receive until the times of the restitution of all things*' (iii. 21). If, then, He is to be retained in heaven until 'the restitution of all things,' how can He be present repeatedly in the Mass? We reply that Christ remains in the heavens as His permanent dwelling-place in that visible and corporeal mode of presence with which He 'was taken up into heaven.' He is there in His natural though glorified state, and as He will be *seen* on His return with clouds of glory (Acts i. 11; Matt. xxiv. 30; Apoc. i. 7). His presence in the Mass is not similar in its mode, nor does He leave, for a second, the local heaven where 'He sitteth at the right hand of God,' in order to offer Himself in the Mass. The words of consecration are not said *over the glorified Body of Christ*, as it exists in heaven, so as by their operation to transfer Christ from one place to another place. The act of sacrifice in the Eucharist is not like that by which the victims under the Old Law were *first* present bodily, and then dedicated and slain, the victim being locally on the spot of immolation before it was immolated. In the Eucharist the consecrating words act *directly* on the substance of the bread and wine, and the

effect is a cessation of that substance—of which cessation the terminal result is the presence of Christ. There is, therefore, no *bringing* of Christ out of heaven, in the ordinary sense of the word 'bring,' but there is a new act and mode of the presence of the Body and Blood which are upon the Christian altar simultaneously with that presence of Christ in heaven in His own natural and non-Eucharistic form, which undergoes there no change, either local or of any other kind. This is the true answer to the objection; but it may also be observed, that to affirm that Christ never leaves the heavens, even for a brief period, is an assumption not provable from the Scriptures.

Our Lord was certainly seen by S. Paul on his way to Damascus, and apparently was so near as to be heard and spoken to; the light from His presence blinding S. Paul with its effulgence.

'He was *seen* by me,' says the Apostle; and the vision was evidently similar in kind to that of others who had beheld Christ with their bodily eyes. 'He was seen by Cephas, . . by more than 500 brethren at once, . . by James, then by all the Apostles, and last of all He was seen *also* by me' (1 Cor. xv. 8). 'The God of our fathers hath preordained thee that thou shouldst *see* the Just One, and shouldst hear the voice from His mouth' (Acts xxii. 14).

On another occasion in Jerusalem, the Lord *standing by him* said, 'Be constant' (Acts xxiii. 11). Had not S. Paul beheld the actual body of Christ, like the rest of the Apostles, his testimony would not have been that which he claimed it to be—the evidence of an eye-witness (1 Cor. xv. 15). 'Have not I seen Christ Jesus?' (ix. 1.)

'Christ,' writes S. Thomas Aquinas, 'by ascending

once into heaven obtained for Himself and for us perpetually, the right and dignity of the celestial abode; but it is no derogation to that dignity if Christ, by a certain dispensation, sometimes descends in His body to the earth, either that He may show Himself to all men, as in the judgment, or to some individual specially, as to Paul' (Sum. iii. q. lvii. ar. 6 ad 3).

Whether on the latter occasion Christ quitted the heavens locally, or was in two places at once, is doubtful; but that Scripture does not exclude the fact, or possibility of the first supposition, is absolutely certain.

Leaving this question aside, let us now pass on to another argument which is considered by many to be very weighty against the Mass.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### THE EUCHARIST AS A COMMEMORATIVE SACRIFICE.

It is objected to the Catholic doctrine that the Eucharist cannot be a real sacrifice in which Christ is actually present because it was instituted in memory of Him: 'Do this for a commemoration of Me' (Luke xxii. 19). We have, however, to deal with facts, and not with imaginary meanings of words. Did our Lord Himself consider that the commemoration which He meant and instituted was incompatible with the idea, or fact, of His personal presence? If not, then the Protestant argument falls to the ground. Our opponents will admit that the Apostles were commissioned to do precisely what their Master did, and precisely for the same object. His conduct was their sole rule.



Now when our Lord said, 'Do this for a commemoration of Me,' He told the Apostles to do what He first did Himself. What, then, had He done? Consecrated the bread and wine, and by His word changed their substance into that of His own Body and Blood: it was this placing of Himself, by a sacrificial act, in the mystical position of a Victim, and offering Himself to them as sacramental food, under the appearance of bread and wine, which constituted the commemoration of Himself. Christ therefore, being present in His visible person before the eyes of His Apostles, did an act which was a memorial of Himself. His presence did not destroy the representative nature of the act. As by the offering of blood in the Old Law, there was made 'a commemoration of sins' (Heb. x. 3), so by the offering of Christ in the Eucharist there was made a memorial, not of sins, but of Christ the Saviour from sin, which salvation He perfected by His death on the Cross. Whenever in the Old Law the blood of victims was presented before God as a sin-offering, it was at the same time not only an expiatory act, so far as the Law could expiate—which could not cleanse the conscience from guilt—but it was a continual proclamation that sin had *not* been truly atoned for; it was a blood-writing of continued condemnation, although foreshadowing a future and real expiation. The repeated presence of Christ, on the contrary, as a Victim on the altar, is a repeated testimony that sin *has* been 'exhausted'; it is a memorial of the reign of life and peace that has succeeded to that of death and of separation between God and man. 'This is the only commemoration which makes God propitious to men' (Origen, Hom. xiii. in Levit.). If the personal presence of Christ is inconsistent with *any* commemoration of

Himself, how can it then be true that 'He is always living to make intercession for us' (Heb. vii. 25) in heaven itself? His personal intercession at the right hand of God is continual, and yet it rests for its efficacy upon the perpetual presentation before God of His merits and past death: is not this act a commemoration? Not one like that in the Mass, for Christ is not mystically slain in heaven as He is in this sacrament upon earth: it is, however, a *commemoration*, and a sacerdotal act, for it is as High Priest after the order of Melchisedech that He pleads the virtue of His Passion before the eternal throne. 'He preferred to carry with Him into heaven the wounds received for us, rather than to efface them, in order that He might show to God the Father the cost of our liberty' (Ambros. in Luc. l. x. n. 170).

If then even the visible presence of Christ in His natural and non-sacramental state is compatible with the idea and the fact of a commemoration of Himself, still more is it compatible with such a kind of memorial rite as is the Eucharist, where Christ is hidden although present, where He is present in a mode different from that of His presence in heaven, where, from the time

\* The intercession of Christ in heaven, which derives its efficacy from the perfection of His past merits, is not a prayer in the proper sense of the word, but it is such a manifestation to God of His most holy human will, whether tacit or explicit and oral, as is alone fitting for Him to make who 'is set on the right hand of the throne of Majesty' (Heb. viii. 1), and to whom 'all power is given in heaven and in earth' (Matt. xxviii. 18). 'Prayer is not only the representation of my will, but it seems to connote or include the absence of full and absolute power in the supplicant; . . . therefore we do not say, speaking with strict accuracy, that Christ prays to God, although, in a less rigorous sense, He may be able to pray and to entreat. . . . We do not ask Christ to pray for us, but to have mercy upon us' (De Lugo, *De Incarn. disp.* xxvii. sec. 4, n. 63, 62).

that His ministers began to fulfil His own command, they have been the only visible celebrants of the sacrifice, and where the external signs of those elements, whose substance has been changed, remain unaltered in appearance.

The Eucharist has been truly called by S. Jerome a 'type of the passion' (Contr. Jovin. ii. c. ii.), and by Gelasius the celebration of 'the image and likeness of the Body and Blood of Christ' (Cont. Eutyech. Bib. Max. t. viii. p. 708), *i.e.* of the Body and Blood as offered on the Cross. It is the *representation*, in a bloodless form, of the sacrifice of Calvary; it is a 'sacrifice corresponding to the passion,' and appropriately said to be 'the passion offered in sacrifice;' 'because in all our sacrifices,' says S. Cyprian, 'we make mention of the passion, since the passion of the Lord is the sacrifice which we offer' (Ep. lxiii. ad Cæcil.).

Our Lord, says the Council of Trent, left us 'a sacrifice by which that bloody sacrifice to be accomplished on the Cross once, should be represented, and its memory remain until the end of the world' (Sess. xxii. c. i.). So S. Thomas Aquinas writes: 'The celebration of this sacrament is a certain representative image of the passion of Christ, which (*i.e.* passion) is His true immolation, and therefore the celebration of this sacrament is called the immolation of Christ' (Summa, iii. q. lxxxiii. ar. l.); according to S. Augustine's saying, that 'the likenesses of things are called by the names of what they resemble.' 'Christ,' says a writer of the fourth century, 'Who alone died for us, is the same Who, being immolated throughout the several houses of the Churches, in the mystery of bread and wine, refreshes us;' and he adds that 'Christ willed that souls should be sanctified by the precious blood,

through the image of His own (real) passion' (Gaudentius Brixienensis, Serm. ii. in Exod. ad Neophyt.).

All sacraments are channels through which the sanctifying virtue that flows from the passion of Christ is communicated; but in the Eucharist the whole action is intended to represent the passion itself, as well as to impart its virtue. Moreover, this representation is not merely that which even the visible ritual embodies and expresses; it is not only an august drama, intended to renew and republish the past crucifixion of Christ, and so impress it on the understanding, affections, and memory of the faithful. This is but a part of the commemorative side of the Eucharist: for this mystery is also a commemoration made to God; and it is the non-recognition of this ineffably wonderful characteristic of the Eucharist, that leads so many Protestants to suppose that the presence of Christ Himself, besides being needless, is actually inconsistent with any commemorative service at all. Once, however, let it be understood that the Eucharist is a divinely appointed mode of 'showing forth the Lord's death,' not *only* for the edification of the faithful by its symbolical aspect as a sacred ritual, but as a real oblation offered to God by Christ Himself as the principal High Priest, and then it will be immediately perceived that the commemorative power, so to say, of the Eucharist, is *increased* to an immense extent by the presence of the Redeemer. Who can plead the merit of His own death so mightily as the Victim Himself? Why should this intercessory commemoration be made so efficacious by His personal presence in heaven, and be at the same time so incongruous upon earth?

The presence of Christ in the Eucharist gives reality to what would otherwise be a figure only; it

vivifies what would otherwise be a mere dead picture; it brings down, and diffuses among the souls of men daily, the fruit of the Cross, by the hands of the Crucified Himself; Christ, Who said, 'Do this for a commemoration of Me,' becomes, through His ministers, His own Memorialist before God in behalf of His redeemed. Those non-Catholics who admit the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist have a much deeper appreciation of its nature than those who deny it, but they are still far from the full truth so long as they fail to perceive that the act by which that presence is produced is a true sacrifice. In fact, the Catholic doctrine alone brings out in all its prominence, clearness, and emphatic meaning, the representative nature of the Eucharist. Nothing can possibly reproduce the sacrifice of the Cross, for the purpose of pleading its infinite merits, so perfectly and with such an unapproachable excellence of similitude, as that act which is itself a sacrifice and is presented to God by the same High Priest Who expiated the sins of the world on Calvary. What other kind of commemoration can equal that?

'The Hebrews by the victims of animals which they offered up to God celebrated a prophecy, such as was in many and various ways worthy of so great a thing—the future Victim which Christ offered. Wherefore Christians now *celebrate the memory* of that same completed sacrifice *by the most holy oblation* and participation of the Body and Blood of Christ' (Augustinus, Cont. Faustum).

It is not difficult to conceive that the true doctrine of the death of Christ as a propitiation and redeeming sacrifice, in contradistinction to its being merely an exemplary heroic martyrdom, may fade away from the

creed of members of those religious communities which deny the Eucharist to be a sacrifice, but such a fundamental error is one into which no Catholic can by any possibility fall.

The sacrifice of the Mediator as a great act of Atonement is to the most ordinary Catholic no mere dogma, no mere history, no mere theological conviction; nor is it a truth which is only occasionally brought before his mind. It lives perpetually fresh in the Mass; it evokes his deepest affections, and is ever gathering into one central worship all the currents of his devotional life.

As long as the Catholic Church exists upon earth, so long will the doctrine of the Cross be as strongly stamped on the minds of its devout members as if they had been present upon the mount of Calvary itself. The Mass is far more than the inspired written revelation of God; for whilst we learn from the latter the truth *about* Christ, we behold in the former, with the eye of faith, the Divine Redeemer and Victim Himself actually present; and if we partake of Him by Holy Communion, we are, as S. Chrysostom said, 'Commingled with Him, and we are of one body and blood with Him.' Hence, in a striking passage of a sermon by Theodotus of Ancyra at the Council of Ephesus, in the fifth century, the altar is called 'this *redemptive* table.' He says that Christ 'is now no longer laid in a manger, but exposed on this redemptive table. For that manger was the mother of this table, and therefore is He placed upon this, that He may be eaten upon it, and become a redemptive food to believers' (Harduin. i. p. 1652 e; quoted in 'Jesus the Son of Mary,' by J. B. Morris, vol. ii. p. 170).

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE SACRIFICIAL IMMOLATION ; AND THE PRIESTHOOD.

IN the sacrifice on the Cross there was necessarily a physical destruction of life : our Lord died in the full and ordinary meaning of the word. Such another destruction was impossible, but an act takes place in the Eucharist which is as near to the death on the Cross as is possible, according to the nature of the possibilities of the case. This effect, which is, in the acceptation of God, morally equivalent to a real destruction, is the result of the consecration by which Christ is placed on the altar in the condition of a victim. He is not merely *present*, but He is present in a state which is a kind of death. The substance of the bread and wine has passed away, nothing of them remaining but the accidents or species, and our Lord has lowered Himself, by an unspeakable condescension, so as to submit to a mysterious relation towards them which renders Him, *as it were*, passive ; for through them He is moved and carried about, and enters the bodies of the faithful as food. He Who is Life Eternal seems as if He were no longer living. He is in the Eucharist with all the perfection of His Godhead, and all the complete nature, functions, and glory of His Manhood ; all that He is in heaven He is in His Sacrament, but He does not manifest His corporal life in the Sacrament, nor is He able to exercise it there as He does in heaven. 'Every action which is connatural to His bodily life, and depends upon the senses, ceases' (Franzelin. De Euch. p. 269).

Although it is utterly impossible for us to under-

stand a mystery as clearly as if it were not a mystery, yet we can form a notion of the Eucharistic presence sufficiently intelligible for the necessary distinction that should be made between it and that of our Lord as He was when living on the earth, or as He is in heaven. Analogy will aid us in some degree: water in a state of vapour, for instance, is still water, but whilst it is in the condition of vapour it cannot act precisely as it does when it is fluid, and not vaporous. The one condition bars and suspends the other. So, to raise our thoughts from this homely illustration, the sacramental state, so long as it lasts, is a kind of suspension of the natural state of Christ's humanity; a suspension which, of course, begins in, is limited to, and ends with, His presence in the Sacrament. As His Godhead is said to have emptied itself by assuming the Manhood, so Christ, Who is now in His glorified human nature, assumes in the Eucharist a mode of presence which is expressive of sacrificial destruction. 'Although by the consecration Christ is not *substantially* destroyed, He is nevertheless destroyed . . . *in so far as* He takes upon Himself an inferior condition, and such a one as is rendered inapt for the human uses of the human body; wherefore, in respect to the human mode' (*i.e.* of the human body), 'He is the same as if He became real bread, and were fitted and prepared as food. This change is sufficient for a true sacrifice; for that becomes capable of being eaten which before was not capable; and it becomes eatable in such a sense that it is no longer applicable for other uses except in the manner of food; and this is a greater change than others which have been held, in the estimation of men, to suffice for a true sacrifice' (De Lugo, De Sac. Euch. disp. xix. sec. 5). '*His Body and Blood, so far as*



*His presence is linked to the species, are resigned in a certain way to the will of creatures, just as if He were something inanimate ; He places Himself in such a condition that He, the High Priest for the whole Church, of which He is the Head, expresses (and the Church also through Him) in His most sacred Body and Blood the supreme dominion of God, and the absolute dependence of every creature ; of which [creation] He the Man Christ Jesus is the First-born ; and He, at the same time, sets forth that satisfaction for guilt which was formerly consummated on the Cross by the delivering up of His Body and the shedding of His Blood (Franzelin. De Euch. p. 380).*

There is another opinion, with such names as S. Bonaventura, Suarez, and others for its support, which supposes that our Lord, either naturally or by a miracle, *does* exercise His senses in the Eucharist. The question has been stated compendiously by Father Dalgairns in the fourth chapter of his admirable treatise on the Holy Communion, to which I refer those who desire to enter more fully into this deep but most interesting subject.

The *quasi*-death in the Eucharist is also eminently signified by the particular mode which our Divine Lord has instituted of accomplishing His mystical death ; for instead of one indivisible formula of consecration, the sacrificial words are twofold ; the Body of Christ being placed on the altar by virtue of the words which alone consecrate the bread, and the Blood of Christ being placed on the same altar by virtue of the words which alone consecrate the wine. Thus, although, in consequence of the necessary union existing between the Body and Blood of the ever-living Christ, where one is there the other must also be, still, *so far as the presence*

of His Body and Blood depends on the force of the consecrating words, the Body and Blood come separately into the state of sacramental presence. Hence this double and distinct consecration, by separate acts and words, is not merely a liturgical *symbol* of a sacrifice, only representative externally of the separation of the Body and Blood of Christ, but Christ has made it an essential part of the sacrifice. He obeys His own words and is present, so far as the consecrating act produces its effect, separately as to His Body, and separately as to His Blood. So real is this act of Christ, that if there be *only* a consecration of the bread, or *only* one of the wine, our Lord would be present, but not *as a sacrifice*, for the immolation would be absent, being incomplete. Where the sacrificial words are not used in their entirety, the mystical oblation does not take place; the Lamb is there, but not, 'as it were, slain' (Apoc. v. 6), for only the full word is the sword; for 'by the word,' says S. Gregory of Nazianzum, 'thou [the priest] attractest the Word, when using the voice for a sword thou dividest by a bloodless cutting the Lord's Body and Blood' (Ep. 171 al. 240 ad Amphilocho.).

It is true that this sacrificial oblation of Christ, as a commemoration of Himself and by Himself, is invisible; so was the presentation of His merits to God ever invisible; so was His Godhead invisible when He was on the Cross, that Godhead which gave to the merits of His humanity their value. We live by faith, and in every sacrament the virtue is unseen; but so far as is possible, He has brought this mighty sacrifice within the range of the senses, by the institution of a ministry which effects the sacrifice in a visible and audible manner. The words, 'This is My Body, this is My Blood,' are not historical words only; they are 'spirit

and life;' they are like the laws of Nature, only more sure and sublime, and act by the continuously present power of Him Who spake them once, that they might accomplish their work for ever until the end of the world. 'The words sound, and pass away; nevertheless the virtue which operates through them remains perpetually' (Augustin. Cont. Faust. xix. c. xvi.). S. Ambrose, contrasting the shadow of the Old Law with that truer image of celestial things which the Church enjoys, says, 'We have seen the Chief of Priests coming to us; we have seen and heard Him offering His Blood for us: we priests, according as we are able, follow in order, that we may offer for the people; weak indeed we are by our deserts, but still honourable by our sacrifice; because, although Christ is not now seen to offer, He Himself nevertheless is made *manifest* as offering *within us*, He Whose word sanctifies the sacrifice which is offered: He indeed is standing by as an advocate with the Father, but we behold Him not now; we shall behold Him in that hour when the image shall have passed away, and the truth shall have come. For then these things which are perfect shall be seen, not through a glass, but face to face' (In Ps. xxxviii. n. 25, et De Off. l. i. c. xlviii. n. 248).

The nature of the Eucharist is adapted to our present condition, which is midway between that of the ancient synagogue, which is past, and the final triumph in heaven, which is future. 'The first tabernacle was in shadow and figure; the second is in figure and reality; the third, in truth alone. In the first, the way is pointed out; in the second, it is given; in the third, it is possessed: . . . in the third *nothing* is in figure; all things there are in reality' (Bruno Astensis, ap. Franzelin. De Sacramentis, p. 13).

So closely is that which is obvious to the senses connected with that which is unseen in the Eucharist, that S. Chrysostom says we there *see* Christ: 'When we are about to behold, during this evening, Him, as the Lamb slain and immolated, Who was affixed to the Cross, let us approach with trembling. . . . When the Holy Ghost descends, when He touches the oblations, when thou seest the sheep killed and consummated, dost thou stir up a tumult?' (Hom. de Cœmit. n. 3.)

'It is not a necessary condition for a victim that it should be *in its own self* obvious to the senses; because it is offered to God, from Whom nothing is hidden; but it is sufficient if it is made obvious to our senses through some other thing beneath which it exists, in order that we may know that it is lying hidden therein, and that we may be able to handle it' (Lessius, De Perfect. Div. lib. xii. c. xiii.). The same author observes, incidentally, that the ordination of the Mass as a sacrifice makes it especially fitting that transubstantiation should take place; for otherwise the sensible appearances would only indicate that the substance of bread and wine was there, whereas now they only indicate that the Body and Blood of Christ are there, although unseen, except by means of the species.

Since Christ, therefore, offers Himself as a sacrifice, representative and commemorative of that of the Cross, through the visible agency of His earthly ministers, He may thus be said to be beheld reflected in them, and especially in the sacrament which they consecrate.

### THE PRIESTHOOD.

The relation between the priests of the Church to the sacrifice of the Mass is of such a nature, that when

believed in and understood, it throws a light upon the mystery which ought to dissipate one difficulty, at least, that is experienced by non-Catholics in regard to the Catholic doctrine.

‘How,’ they say, ‘can there be such a power in a few words said over bread and wine that they are changed into the presence of Christ? Is it not an incredible presumption that mortals like ourselves should claim to place Jesus Christ upon an altar in the state of a victim and of food, and this, too, for all ages?’

If men professed to have such a power in and by themselves, and if the mere sacramental words, as vocal sounds, were supposed to have within them some intrinsic quality that could alter the very nature of the matter, no doubt nothing could be more incredible. But this is a chimera, a controversial fiction, an irrational caricature of Catholic doctrine. All the supernatural power of sacramental words, and of ministers who apply these words sacramentally, comes from Christ Himself. The ministry and the words are His own institution. He, by his Incarnation and death, merited the right and power to originate and carry into effect this institution, and to endow it with permanent virtue. God might have chosen other ways of sanctifying and saving the world; but, as a fact divine and unalterable, He has chosen a means of which the Incarnation is the essential basis.

It is through His Incarnation that God has enabled the human nature which He assumed, to become, as S. Thomas Aquinas says, ‘a certain organ or instrument of the Divinity, and therefore it has imparted, in its operation, something of the Divine virtue’ (*De Veritat.* q. xxvii. a. 4). Since this union of the humanity with the Godhead is a union with the per-

sonality of the Word, and indivisible, the humanity is the perpetual instrument of the Godhead to which it is joined. When, therefore, Christ instituted the sacraments, they were not the actions of God only, or of man only, but of the humanity *as united to God*; and the divine virtue passed into them; so that 'the saving virtue flowed into the sacraments from the divinity through the humanity' (S. Thom. Summa, iii. q. lxii. a. 5).

Thus the power of sacramental words and actions is what it is solely because Christ is what He is: He has from the Cross drawn material words and substances to Himself, and quickened them by the contact of His passion into instruments of grace. In the Eucharist He has done more: for not only has He given to it a participation of the virtue of His merits, but He informs and inhabits it with that very Body and Blood, from which all the virtue communicated by the other sacraments is derived. The humanity which has redeemed us is there, without any barrier between it and us, except the thin veil of the species.

The sacraments, however, cannot exist by themselves; and the Incarnate God has not chosen to remain upon the earth to effect His sacramental operations in His own visible person. In instituting them at the beginning, He also ordained, as an essential part of their institution, the coöperation of human agents; and His right and power to appoint men for the purpose of acting in His place, and of producing the same effect as if He were visibly acting Himself, rest on precisely the same foundation as His right and power to redeem the world—His Incarnation and death. He who had 'all power' could and did communicate and delegate that power to others inferior to Himself: He

did not part with His power, but He made others share it in the sense of becoming its administrators. He might have chosen angels for this purpose ; but since He was man, and was born and died for man, He, as the second Adam, diffused His power amongst His own flesh and blood. Men were made the subordinate and vicarious instruments of His humanity, as His humanity was made, by the hypostatic union, the instrument of His Godhead.

Thus mortal men became in their official character as His deputies, a kind of living sacrament of Himself, through whose souls and bodies He acts in the Church and on the world. The divine mission which the Father gave to Him did not stop within Himself, enclosed and sealed up ; but by His own will He bade the supernatural current of grace and authority flow on through and beyond Himself. He took up, as it were, the original command to man, 'increase and multiply'—a command which, being given after the fall, spread human woe and death as well as life—and exalted it into a new meaning and a new sphere, when He, the risen Head of a risen race, increased and multiplied Himself in the persons of His servants, the ministers of the new kingdom. 'All power is given to Me in heaven and in earth ; going *therefore* teach ye all nations, baptising them ; . . . whose sins you shall forgive they shall be forgiven ; . . . he that heareth you heareth Me.' As Christ united men with Himself, and clothed them with the mantle of His own office, for the purpose of baptising, forgiving sins, and teaching in His name, so also He communicated to them the power of offering Him in sacrifice : 'Do this for a commemoration of Me.' The participation in the priesthood of Christ, which was given originally to the Apostles, was not a solitary

privilege limited to them ; they were only the first link of a succession that will last until the end of the world. 'I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world' (Matt. xxviii. 20). 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost' (John xx. 22). 'I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you *for ever*' (xiv. 16).

The succession of the earthly priests of the New Law is the process by which, through a special sacrament in which the Holy Ghost confers upon them the sacerdotal character and power, they become associated with Christ in His everlasting priesthood. Men can depute their fellow-men to perform official actions which, being within the sphere of nature, require no higher power to accomplish their exercise ; but supernatural actions require a supernatural gift ; hence, therefore, Christ instituted the sacrament of Orders, by means of which He, through the Holy Spirit, enables men to do by grace what would be impossible to them without grace. He links them to Himself by His own Spirit, and thus makes them capable of being fellow-workers with Him in carrying out those functions of His priesthood which no man can possibly fulfil by virtue of a merely human ability.

Here at once we perceive a vast and remarkable difference between the human priests of the Old Dispensation and those of the New. The priests of the Old Dispensation not only were unable to offer any but carnal and typical victims, but they had no supernatural power to consecrate their sacrifices ; and besides this, each priest acted, so to speak, in his own name, and on his own individual account : he and his sacrifice were independent of the other priests and sacrifices of the Law : the priests of the Old Law were typical figures of the



future Christ, but they were not the official representatives and vicarious deputies of Him, or indeed of any priest higher than themselves. Their acts were not radiations from a central authority, of which they were the secondary instruments. So the old priesthood as an institution, and the priests as sacred personages, passed away together, because both were temporary, and the one could not exist apart from the other. Not so is it with the earthly priests of the kingdom of Christ: they are not priests on their account, nor do they act in their own name, but they are the temporary and visible *ministers* of Another; their priesthood flows from and resides in Jesus Christ; it is theirs *because* it is His; they do not derive it from a divine institution only, like the Aaronic priests from the Mosaic law, but they derive and hold it as a delegated office from the God-man as an ever-living Person Who has an everlasting priesthood,—it is a work and gift of the Spirit.

His priesthood continues because He Himself lives for ever, and hence it follows that it is by His virtue, grace, and power that the sacerdotal acts of all mortal priests operate divinely in the Church from age to age. Hence it is that when a true minister of Christ applies the sacramental words to the fitting matter, the effect is infallible, although invisible. For 'an instrument,' as S. Thomas says, 'effects that which it operates by itself, so far only as it is moved by the principal agent' (Summa, iii. q. lxii. a. 4); and since in the Sacraments Jesus Christ as man is the principal agent, the priest, who is His earthly ministerial instrument, cannot fail to accomplish what Christ intends to effect through him: he can no more fail than Christ can fail. Hence also it follows that the personal frailty

or sins of human priests cannot touch the efficacy of the sacraments, because they cannot touch the efficacy of Christ's action in them: the divine virtue in passing from the sacred humanity through the official medium of the priest as Christ's 'ambassador,' 'steward,' and *personifier* ('I have done it in the person of Christ,' says S. Paul, 2 Cor. ii. 10), cannot be soiled or impeded by the faultiness of the man.

'The priesthood is transacted on the earth, but it has the disposition (*τάξις*) of heavenly things; for no mortal, nor angel, nor archangel, nor any created power, has ordained these things; it is the Paraclete Himself. . . . When thou beholdest the Lord lying immolated, and the priest standing over the sacrifice and praying, and the surrounding multitude with their lips reddened with the precious Blood, dost thou indeed think that thou art amongst men and on the earth? Rather art not thou instantly rapt into the heavens? . . . O miracle! O the goodness of God! He Who sitteth above with the Father is at that very same moment held by the hands of all; and to those who desire, He gives Himself to be enfolded in their grasp' (Chrysost. De Sacerd. l. iii.).

The personal action of our High Priest in His body the Church, and through His ministers, is frequently dilated upon by the Fathers. 'Christ,' says S. Augustine, 'has not ceased to baptise; but He still does this, not by the ministration of the body, but by the invisible working of His majesty' (Cont. Litt. Petilian.).

Of the Eucharist S. Chrysostom thus speaks: 'This voice' (namely, '*This is My Body*'), having been once uttered, effects a complete sacrifice in the churches at every single table, from that time to the present day, ever and ever until His coming' (Hom. i. de Prodit. Jud. n. 6). Nothing can show more clearly the instru-

mental character of the priest's office than the fact that when he consecrates the Eucharist he sinks his individuality as a man, by using the words of Christ precisely as if Christ were speaking them in His own person, through the priest's lips. When the priest says, 'This is *My* Body, this is *My* Blood,' 'he does not,' as an ancient writer observes, whose work has been attributed to S. Ambrose, 'use his own words, but the words of Christ; therefore it is the word of Christ that effects this sacrament. What is the word of Christ?—that truly by which all things have been made: . . . it was not the Body of Christ before the consecration; but after the consecration it is now (I tell thee) the Body of Christ' (De Sac. lib. iv. c. iv. inter Opp. Ambros.). It is this real relation between the priesthood of Christ and that of His earthly ministers, which, whilst it creates and fixes for ever the especial dignity of their office, also affirms their individual nothingness and unworthiness, by referring everything that is supernatural and excellent in their office to Him from Whom it has sprung, and by Whose sustaining presence alone it is preserved and perpetuated from generation to generation, undiminished alike in authority and virtue.

'The words of our Saviour whereby He effects the sacrament constitute the form of the sacrament: for the priest, speaking in the person of Christ, effects this sacrament' (Decret. Eugenii IV. pro Armenis).

There is a certain unity in error because there is a unity in truth: for the positive determines the negative, which is its contradiction. The denial of the power of any human being to produce the real presence of Christ on the Christian altar naturally leads to the denial of a priesthood as the especial administrators of the sacramental grace which Christ has established in His king-

dom. For if no extraordinary supernatural act like the Eucharist, in the Catholic sense of the term, is required to be performed upon earth, what is the object of a class of men being endowed with such a superhuman gift as is conferred by consecration to the priesthood? On this theory, such an institution would be undoubtedly an unmeaning anomaly. Ministers of religion, therefore, have come to be regarded as convenient for many purposes; for instance, by facilitating a division of labour, by conducing to order ecclesiastical matters, and by acting as proxies for the laity, who are chiefly engaged in secular pursuits; just as the judicial, military, and artisan classes are serviceable to the body politic at large. But that there is any real distinction between clergy and laity, and that Christ acts through the former as His only recognised official instruments in certain fundamental departments of religion, in a way in which He does not act through the laity,—this is a belief which cannot live where the Catholic doctrine of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist is rejected; or if it exists at all, it is vague and lifeless, and is held, without any logical consistency, by the private fancy of individuals as a probable opinion, rather than as an essential part of the very structure of Christianity.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### CHRISTIAN WORSHIP, AND THE CHRISTIAN SACRIFICE.

ONE of the vital and most characteristic differences between the Catholic faith and all forms of Protestantism turns on the relation that subsists between

Christ and His Church upon earth. According to the Protestant idea, the Church consists of a number of individuals who believe certain facts and doctrines about Christ, and who receive individually certain graces from the Holy Ghost. But the Church is not with them as with Catholics, an organic visible kingdom in which He *now* dwells, moves, and reigns. *Their* Christ ascended into heaven 1800 years ago; His personal work was finished on the Cross; between that past and the future when He will come again to judge the world there is a great chasm; and in the mean time men must do the best they can to arrive at the truth which He left behind Him in the written record of inspiration. Christianity is thus regarded as a series of phenomena—a history and an utterance, in many points most obscure, of certain doctrines about the soul and body, and a future state. It may be a message or a problem, but it is not a dispensation which the Founder still carries on by means of an authoritative ministry and laws. The Church is, on this theory, merely the outcome of individual convictions, manifesting themselves for the sake of a convenient testimony and coöperation, in the form of congregational societies. The individuals make their own churches, which are neither higher nor better than they are themselves; and there is no *one* Church of Christ at all, except by mental abstraction or poetical fiction.

As there is no essential distinction between clergy and laity, so there is no worship which cannot be equally offered up by all. If the clergy take a more prominent and public part in worship, it is for reasons of expediency and propriety, not because there is any especial *kind* of worship which they can render to God, and the laity cannot.

It is this non-recognition of the Church as the living mystical body of Christ—this failure to perceive that the mediatorial office of Christ is being daily exercised by Him through His priests upon earth—this extinction of the sacerdotal feature of the kingdom of the Gospel—this heterogeneous and arbitrary fusion of clergy and laity—this confounding of the shepherds with the sheep—that lies at the root of one of the most extraordinary of all the results of the Protestant phase of Christianity.

The Reformation has much to answer for; but probably it has done nothing which is a more signal corruption of the 'faith once delivered to the saints' than its effacement of that central idea of religion—the adoration of God by sacrifice. This is not a mere error about some detail in doctrine; it is one that has utterly abolished that especial mode of acknowledging, by external manifestation, the supreme sovereignty of God, which was not only limited to God exclusively, and forbidden to be offered to creatures, however exalted, but was enjoined by God Himself from the beginning of the world, as a necessary and fundamental part of the duty of His creatures towards Him their Creator. S. Augustine says of even the pagan worship by sacrifice, 'That those who know the Christian writings of both Testaments do not, in the case of sacrilegious rites of the pagans, blame them because they build temples and establish priesthoods and perform sacrifices, but because they offer these to idols and devils' (Ep. ccii. *Ad Deo Gratias*, q. iii. n. 18, and *De Civ. Dei*, l. x. c. xx.). The denial that there is any sacrificial worship under the Gospel is, indeed, not only a blow at what is part of the public practical life of the Christian religion in particular, but it is a blow at *all* religion, not merely so far as it has been positively revealed by

God to the patriarchs and to the Jews, but even so far as it has been apprehended, however dimly and erroneously, by those who had nothing to guide them but the ancient memories of a distorted tradition engrafted on the deep common instincts of their human nature.

The Reformation broke off not only from the belief of the Catholic Church of the sixteenth century in certain truths which were falsely called corruptions of Christianity, but it severed itself from the most elementary and primeval idea of worship that had ever been known, believed in, and practised, by mankind throughout all previous ages and all countries. They who deny that there is any worship by sacrifice under the New Law do so on the alleged ground that their Christ has fulfilled the ancient types of the Mosaic Law by His death, and that since all the types are over, therefore all sacrifice is over. But they overlook a most important point: the types were to be done away with by being fulfilled; and they were to be fulfilled, not in part, but in the entirety of their significance. Now the Jewish sacrifices were acts of public worship, acts of the Jewish people as the elect family or Church of God: there was not one single sacrifice of any kind which was not a mode and an act of adoration on the part of the people towards God. This idea and truth was in every possible way stamped upon the consciousness of every Israelite. God had arranged everything in His dealings and covenants with His ancient people so as to train them up in the conviction that His religion was preëminently a worship by external sacrifice. This revelation was an underlying element of all their worship, and the different kinds of sacrifice were only different modes of obeying and embodying this revelation.

When, therefore, the hour came for fulfilling the typical religion of the Jews by the reality which it prefigured, it is clear that such a fulfilment absolutely required that there should be a new and higher *public worship of God by sacrifice*. The sacrifices of the Jews were not hieroglyphical or sacred histrionic ceremonies only: they were real acts of adoration, typical of, and to be in due time succeeded by, other acts of adoration which were to be sacrificial, like their prototypes, though in a higher order of worship. If there is no public sacrifice in the kingdom of Christ perfecting by its august and ineffable superiority the figurative sacrifices of the Old Law, then the Mosaic types have not been replaced by the reality; which is equivalent to saying that Christ has not yet come. It is no answer to say that the Jewish typical sacrifices were perfectly fulfilled by our Lord's sacrifice on the Cross: for if so, we then ask, where is the accomplishment of the typical sacrifice *in its essential character as an external worship of God*? To claim fulfilment for the type, and in the same breath, to deny the fulfilment of its sacrificial quality, is to separate, without a shadow of a reason or authority, that which God Himself originally joined together. The typical and sacrificial parts of the Jewish dispensation stand or fall together; they form one revealed whole: and to affirm, as Protestants do, that there is nothing in Christianity to correspond with the worship of God by sacrifice under the Old Law, as the substance corresponds with the shadow, is to renounce in the face of Judaism the very justification of Christianity itself.

It is true that our Lord in dying upon the Cross did not merely expiate our sins; the very act by which He delivered up His life-blood was one of the highest



adoration: never before had God received such an acknowledgment of His Sovereignty, such an atonement for His offended Majesty, such a homage of thanksgiving, as when the Son of God and Man 'gave up the Ghost' amidst the mocking insults of His murderers. Jesus Christ adored the Blessed Trinity by means of the very sacrifice which He voluntarily endured; and He had that especial object, amongst others, in dying for the world. The perfect Redeemer was the perfect Adorer.

But had our Lord utterly finished on the Cross His sacrificial adoration by that one personal act, and had He given to man no means of adoring God by sacrifice, which should be a public religious manifestation of the Divine Sovereignty on the part of His Church, He would only have completed one portion of His mediatorial office. Prophecy and type would then have failed totally, because for them to fail in a single point is to collapse altogether.

The habit of fixing the mind almost exclusively upon the one fact of the atonement on the Cross, has led to a forgetfulness that this was only *one* exercise, however mighty and precious, of the priesthood of Christ; a priesthood which is everlasting, and is continually in operation both in heaven and on earth for the benefit of man. The practical effect of Protestant theology has been so to exalt the particular act of Christ's death as to cast everything else into the shade; the doctrine that Christ Himself is our *present* great High Priest has been virtually effaced by that of the atonement; it has been buried in it as in a grave; thus a partial truth about Christ has 'dissolved Christ,' by mutilating His mediatorial office, which is, and must be ever regarded as, an indivisible whole. The

Catholic doctrine, on the contrary, expresses the entire truth as it is revealed in Scripture, and the Catholic Church has ever lived upon, and embodied this truth in her worship, from the beginning of her existence in the days of the Apostles. Christ, according to S. Paul, is not a High Priest who has 1800 years ago disappeared and gone into the heavens, without maintaining that relationship with His Church which He commenced 'in the days of His flesh,' that is, in the period of His suffering state; but He is 'a High Priest *over the house of God*' (Heb. x. 21): not *in* the house of God, as a steward like Moses, who was faithful as a *servant* in all his house' (Heb. iii. 5), but *over and in* the House of God. The House of God means the Church; it is distinctly called so by the Apostle: 'Which house are *we*' (iii. 6); 'The house of God, which is the Church of the living God' (1 Tim. iii. 15). What are, then, the leading ideas expressed by S. Paul's words? (1) The present possession, not the past or future only, of Christ as the High Priest of His Church: '*Having therefore . . . a High Priest . . . let us draw near*' (x. 19-22); (2) the present union of Christ with His Church by a real indwelling; for He is 'the Son in His own house' (iii. 6); the expression 'own' is to remind us that He has built it Himself: 'I will build My Church' (Matt. xvi. 18); and that He 'has purchased it by His own blood' (Acts xx. 28); and (3) we learn that Christ stands, in regard to His own Church as its High Priest, in the closest possible relationship of a living head to a living body. He is 'the head' (Eph. iv. 15) to 'His body, which is the Church' (Coloss. i. 24), and to which He has so united Himself that it is called His own flesh: 'No man ever hated *his own flesh*, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, as also

Christ doth the Church; because we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones' (Eph. v. 29, 30).

Why, we ask, is Christ in and over the Church, as her great High Priest, if it be not for the very purpose of enabling the Church to celebrate through Him, as her Head, the highest act of worship? Why does S. Paul, whilst expressly writing about Christ, tell us 'that every high priest taken from among men is *ordained for men* in the things that appertain to God, *that he may offer gifts and sacrifices*' (Heb. v. 2), if there is such a fundamental difference between Christ and every typical high priest who has foreshadowed Him, as would be the case if our High Priest did *not* offer gifts and sacrifices for us in our collective character as a visible Church?

What can be more improbable than that the actual Christian Church should be the perfect antitype of the figurative Israel, and yet exhibit a congenital deficiency in that feature which pervaded the whole structure and life of Israel as the people of God—worship by sacrifice? Is it not an hypothesis, even antecedently, most incredible on the face of it, that when our Lord came to institute the highest and final form of religion on the earth, He should omit from its system that very mode of adoration which God had formerly revealed to and ordained for man as the culmination of His service—omit it, too, without uttering one solitary word to proclaim the unexampled change?

If the Protestant theory be true, the Jewish Church had been taught to long for a sacrifice which they might offer without a fear of abrogation, and without a taint, only to be mocked by its blank absence. They lost their old imperfect sacrifice, and gained no other to replace it. Their august temple, their national unity, and the pub-

lic and sacred centre around which their ritual revolved, were all to fall to pieces, and nothing was to rise up out of the ruins in their place, expanding what was narrow and glorifying what was earthly, by a transfiguration which should, whilst superseding the Mosaic pattern, still bear such resemblance to it as to be a perpetual testimony to the divine authorship and unity of both dispensations, the Law and the Gospel. There is also another consideration worthy of attention. Sacrifice, by its very nature, can be offered to God alone; for it is the visible recognition by man of His incommunicable rights over His creatures; it transcends every other profession of faith; it is the highest summit of religion considered as a representative corporate worship; all the other lines of homage converge to it; nothing can be so due to the Divine Majesty as that which can be lawfully rendered to no being except God. 'Who has ever thought,' says S. Augustine, 'that sacrifice ought to be rendered to any being except to that one whom he knew or considered or feigned to be God?' (*De Civ. Dei*, l. x. c. iv.) 'Whoever heard of any priest of the faithful saying in the prayers, when standing at an altar built even over the body of a martyr to the honour and worship of God, "I offer sacrifice to thee, Peter, or Paul, or Cyprian"? Whereas in those places dedicated to their memories oblation is made to God Who made them men and martyrs, and has associated them in heavenly honour with His holy angels. . . . That these are not sacrifices to the martyrs he knows who knows the one sacrifice of Christians which is also offered there. . . . We do not make priests nor offer sacrifices to our martyrs, because this is unbecoming, undue, unlawful, and is due only to the one God' (*ibid.* l. viii. c. xxxii.).

Yet if there be no sacrifice in the Christian religion,

there would be no religious act by which Christians could render to God that kind of external service which it is His sole prerogative to claim and receive ; an idea which is perceived to be still more extraordinary when we reflect that the signal characteristic of the kingdom of Christ, as declared and prophesied by Himself, was to be a more perfect worship of God than had previously existed, and therefore one more intense in the exclusiveness of its appropriation to Him : it was to be an 'adoration in spirit and in truth.' As no higher kind of worship than sacrifice was known or revealed, the natural inference would be that the Christian adoration 'in spirit and in truth' would be effected by the highest and purest kind of sacrifice that ever had been or ever could be offered ; and yet, instead of this, the Protestant theory actually eliminates sacrifice itself entirely out of Christianity ! It finds no place for that without which Christianity would not be a religion at all, for it would be not like anything that God had ever revealed or prefigured ; it would in this respect be inferior to Judaism, and more divergent from one fundamental principle of worship than even some forms of paganism, which, corrupt as they were, nevertheless preserved the leading idea of worship by sacrifice.

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## CHAPTER X.

### THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH AND THE SACRIFICE.

It is no mere coincidence that those who reject a sacrificing Church reject also a *teaching* Church. Praise and sacrifice were always the essential duties of man to-

wards God : praise, which has its root in knowledge and sacrifice, which is the expression of love. Hence, says a profound writer, Jesus Christ, as the Head of restored humanity, came to offer praise to God by the manifestation of His name to men—Jesus Christ, Who was the Truth and taught the truth—and to offer His love by the sacrifice of Himself. Moreover, to continue and perpetuate His twofold work, ‘On the lips of His mystical body, His Society—the Church—He has left *infallible truth* ; and on His own altar the *Victim* from whose sanctity the sacrifice of every just man who mortifies himself, *i.e.* mystically slays himself in honour of God, derives all its value.’ Christ took upon Himself, by assuming our humanity, and accomplished, the natural duty which is the obligation of the human race. ‘The positive rites of sacrifice which preceded Him were only a prophecy of that august act, and the sacrifice of the Church is only a continuation of it. Moreover the two great duties which the Church enjoins on her ministers are those of praise, called monastically the office (*officium*), and sacrifice’ (Taparelli, *Saggio Teoretico di Dritto Naturale*, note xxxvii.).

The Church, therefore, acting in the name of Christ and for Him, both perpetually teaches His truth and perpetually offers His sacrifice. She teaches also the truth and offers sacrifice in that unity of faith, love, and fellowship which Christ has established in her by His own oneness and the presence of the one Holy Ghost. The Mass is emphatically the ‘Sacrament of Unity.’ These facts shed a suggestive light upon the reason why, as we have observed, the same persons who deny that Christ has upon the earth a Church infallibly teaching the truth should also, by a natural affinity of error, deny that He has upon earth a Church that offers sacrifice.

The Reformers, after breaking with the unity of the Catholic Church, kept up for a time some vague idea of sacrifice in the Eucharist—that is, they allowed it as an action of thanksgiving, but not as a propitiation. But now the very notion of worship by sacrifice, as a fundamental part of Christianity, has disappeared from Protestantism as a system of religion. The opinions of a small theological school in the Church of England cannot be considered as a proof to the contrary.

Such a complete misconception of Christianity could never have arisen in the minds of men if they had not lost that fundamental truth which I have mentioned—the relation of Christ to the Church as its High Priest. He is ‘in’ and ‘over’ her; on earth as well as in heaven; in the present time as well as in the past. This Church, together with her Head, forms one organic kingdom, founded in and preserved by its unity. Her worship, therefore, is that which is presented to God by her members as they form one corporate whole. He who binds them together is Jesus Christ, and as He has given Himself to the Church, there is a mutual possession: He possesses the Church, and the Church, by incorporation, possesses Him. It is by this marvellous union of Jesus Christ with His Church that He has enabled it to worship God with the only sacrifice that can please Him. The Church without Christ for its Priest and Victim could have presented no sacrifice at all; for there was no other priest and no other victim in the whole world whom God would acknowledge except Christ. He is the end and consummation of all priesthood and of all sacrifice. The offering of Christ on the Cross was evidently not such a mode of oblation as could serve the purpose required—namely, a sacrifice by the living Church, perpetually renewable, and lasting throughout the whole

period of its existence on the earth: it was isolated, transient, bloody, and not offered by the Church, but by Christ alone, and was never to be repeated. The infinite love of God solved the problem by the institution of the Eucharist; for through this means our great High Priest and Victim is in the midst of His Church; there He fulfils His office; there He is present with all His merits, sufferings, and death, concentrated into one whole by the reality and unity of His Person; there Calvary is reproduced without its pain, and yet with all its virtue, the transient Cross being eternised by a commemoration that unfolds the Divine Victim Himself, no longer dead, but alive for ever. 'On the Cross He is still a stranger; in [the Eucharistic] worship He is *our own possession, our one Victim*. There He gave Himself for all men; here He gives Himself to each of us. There He is only the Victim; here He is acknowledged and adored as such' (Moehler's Symbolism, c. iv. sec. 34).

This doctrine was clearly expressed at the Lateran Council held in 1215: 'The Universal Church of the faithful is one; . . . *in which* He who is High Priest, the same is the sacrifice, Jesus Christ, whose Body and Blood are truly contained in the Sacrament of the Altar, under the species of bread and wine, the bread having been transubstantiated into the Body and the wine into the Blood, by the power of God' (IV. Conc. Lat. De Sum. Trinit.). 'Since His priesthood was not to be extinguished by death, Christ offered,' says the Council of Trent, 'His Body and Blood to God the Father under the species of bread and wine, that He might leave to His beloved spouse, the Church, a sacrifice that was visible, such as the nature of men requires, by which the bloody sacrifice to be once accomplished on the Cross might be represented' (Sess. xxii. c. i.).



Thus all things are sublimely fitted together : ' All are double one against another, and He hath made nothing defective' (Eccles. xlii. 25). Christ, as the one High Priest of His own Church, offers Himself as the one Victim to God ; and being not Visible in Person, He celebrates this august act of worship conjointly with, and through, His earthly ministers, the priests of the Church. He therefore offers this sacrifice, not separately from His mystical body, but as its highest and principal part. Of this He gave a visible example when at the Last Supper He celebrated the first Eucharist surrounded by His Apostles, out of whose unity, next to that of Christ, the Church has grown as a plant from its organic germinal shoot. Moreover, as Christ belongs to His own Church and is one with it, so, by virtue of the other side of the same mystery, it is equally true that the Church offers up Christ; for the Church, as a whole, acts sacrificially through its appointed priests, who are the immediate and proximate consecrators of the Eucharist.

S. Ignatius, one of the Apostolic Fathers, thus speaks of that which S. Augustine calls the 'Mystery of Remembrance' and the 'Mystery of Unity' : ' One is the Flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one is the blood which has been poured out for us ; one is the bread that has been broken for all, and one is the chalice distributed to all ; one is the altar to every church, and one is the bishop with the presbytery and the deacons, my fellow-servants' (Epist. ad Philadel.).

S. Ignatius is here contemplating only one individual Church in its relation to its divine High Priest. But all the Churches are one through the coherence of their laity with the one priesthood, and of the one priesthood with the one episcopate, of which, according to

S. Cyprian, 'a part is held by each without division of the whole;' and as the episcopate is one through its coherence with the Bishop of Rome, who is the one successor of that Peter 'on whom Christ built the Church, and in whom He began and exhibited the source of unity' (Cyp. De Unit.), the entire Catholic Church throughout the world is thus constituted one 'priestly kingdom,' offering up the one Victim of propitiation and praise to the Divine Majesty.

'The Church,' says S. Cyril of Alexandria, 'is one and the mystery one; and the sacrifice not lawful, yea rather rejected and unable to please God, if it be not offered in the Church' (De Adorat. in Sp. et Ver. l. xiii.). Commenting on Exodus xii. 46, 'In one house shall it [the Passover] be eaten, neither shall you carry forth of the flesh thereof out of the house,' he says, 'They therefore carry forth the gift who do not offer it in the one Catholic house of Christ, that is, the Church' (Adver. Anthropom. l. i.). Theodoret also gives the same application to the words 'in one house:' 'This is observed by the faithful who partake of the divine mysteries in the above Church of God, abominating the synagogues of the heretics' (Quæst. xxiv. in Exod.). S. Leo points out the intimate connection between the one Church and the one sacrifice when he says, 'Thou [Christ] in Thyself dost perfect all the mysteries, that as there is *one sacrifice* instead of every kind of victim, so there may be *one kingdom* formed out of every nation' (Serm. lix. De Pass. Dom.).

S. Jerome lays it down as a characteristic of heretics that they desert the altar-unity, so to speak, of the Church: 'The Apostle teaches that in the Church there is one . . . altar, and one faith, and one baptism, which heretics deserting, have fashioned (*fabricaverunt*) for

themselves many altars; not for the propitiation of God, but for the multiplication of iniquities' (In Osee, c. viii.); 'sacrificing the Lamb outside the sacred and divine sheepfold, *that is*, the Church' (ibid.). If this be Christianity, it is not to be wondered at if the deniers of the one sacrifice of the Mass are also the disbelievers in the one Church of Christ; for between the real Body of Christ and His mystical Body, the Church, there is a divine relationship, rendering an attack upon the one doctrine an attack upon the other.

Since the Church of Christ, being one and visible, requires and possesses one visible sacrifice as the highest expression of its corporate adoration of God, a consequence follows which forms another among the many important distinctions between the Church and all Protestant sects, namely, the absolute obligation of each individual member of the Church to take part in that public and representative sacrificial worship. It would be utterly contradictory to the principle of the unity of the Church, and a violation of its supernatural harmony as a spiritual kingdom, if its constituent members were not to coöperate, according to their measure of duty as ecclesiastics and laics, in that act which is preëminently the central worship of the mystical body of Christ, and in which Christ Himself, being the Offerer and the Oblation offered, is also manifested as the principal bond of union to His visible kingdom upon earth. Hence, the admission of converts to the divine mysteries was in ancient times a sign of full communion with the Church, and exclusion from them, after they had been once invested with the privilege, was a judicial condemnation. S. Chrysostom informs us that in his time, before the more solemn part of the service began, the deacon made a proclamation in which these words

occur: 'See that no spy be present, no one that cannot see the heavenly Blood shed for the remission of sins, no one unworthy of the living sacrifice, no unbaptised person, no one that may not touch the most tremendous mysteries with his polluted lips' (Hom. xxxvi. De Fil. Prod.). 'Let no infidel, no heterodox or heretical person be present' (Apostol. Const. l. viii. c. vi.). In some places heretics were forbidden not only to be present at the Eucharistic mystery, but even to enter the doors of the church. The Council of Laodicea (361) made a rule of this kind.

It was by virtue of the same principle that the celebration of Mass by bishops and priests in other dioceses than their own became one of the recognised pledges and signs of ecclesiastical fellowship. 'Thus Polycarp celebrated Mass in Rome as a sign of his communion with the Pope Anicetus' (Euseb. v. 23). S. Basil defies his enemies to prove that any of the clergy of Apollinaris had been received by him to communion of prayer or of the Eucharist (Ep. ccxxiv. n. 2). Optatus shows the Donatists that they are not in apostolical union: "There are there" [at Rome], he says, "the tombs of the two Apostles. Tell me whether he, [the Donatist Bishop Macrobius,] ventured therein; whether he offered sacrifice there, where these two tombs exist" (xi. 4). Bishops who happened to be in foreign dioceses were obliged to celebrate on Sunday, that it might not appear that they were not in communion' (Klee, *Treatise on the Church*, Cox's trans. p. 18, note).

In the Catholic Church, unity of faith, of fellowship, and of worship are all intimately connected with the unity of the Church and the one great Eucharistic Sacrifice. Whereas in the separated sects, since there

is neither unity of faith, nor even belief in the existence of one corporate sacrifice, to which all public worship converges, no moral *obligation* binds the individual members of these bodies to meet together for the adoration of God ; it may be considered a useful expedient and edifying practice, but it does not rank amongst the essential duties of the Christian religion. Their places of meeting are houses for preaching and prayer, but they are not Christian temples, because they have no true altar : however magnificent externally, they are in reality *conventicles* only, as the buildings of heretics and schismatics were designated by the Church from the earliest periods of Christianity.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### THE LAITY AND THE SACRIFICE.

ALTHOUGH priests alone have the power to consecrate the Eucharist, yet the Church has always recognised the important share of the laity in this mystery, according to their capacity. The priest alone can commemorate Christ's death by the act of sacrifice ; but the laity can also commemorate it by their communions. Christ, says S. Augustin, by bidding us to eat His flesh and drink His blood, 'commanded that there should be a communication with His passion, and that we should sweetly and beneficially cherish in our memory that His flesh has been wounded and crucified for us' (De Doct. Christ. c. xvi.).

To show how that non-sacerdotal members of the

Church are, according to their several degrees of co-operation, associated with the sacrifice, it is only necessary to mention the fact that some of the very words that can be applied in their true proper sense to sacrificing priests exclusively have been also applied, metaphorically and secondarily, to the laity. For instance, they have been called 'priests' and described as 'offering' and even 'celebrating.' Benedict XIV. mentions, on the authority of S. Gregory of Tours, that a certain holy widow spent a whole year in prayer at a particular church, 'celebrating Mass daily, and offering up an oblation for the memory of her husband.'

The Anglo-Saxon king Sigebald,\* in a curious letter to the great S. Boniface, archbishop and martyr, assures him that from a particular date he had always *celebrated Mass* for him, and that should he survive the archbishop he would continue the same practice as long as he lived.

This language sounds strange to us now, and would be probably misunderstood by many, but it illustrates what I have been saying. I may add also that, in the early times of severe persecution, a custom arose according to which the laity were often allowed to take the Blessed Sacrament with them to their private homes, and there, if no priest could be obtained, they elevated it, and, after praying, distributed it to themselves and others of the faithful. This act was called

\* Sigebald, it seems, had petitioned S. Boniface through a priest that he would deign to allow himself to be ranked amongst his own bishops, 'ut meus esses episcopus cum meo episcopo, Daniel,' and he now informs S. Boniface that from the time that he had agreed to his request, he had offered up Mass for him, as well as for the other bishops of Sigebald. 'Notum sit tibi quod et eo tempore nomen tuum adscriptum habuissem, cum *Missarum solemniam celebrarem*, simul cum nominibus episcoporum nostrorum, et modo non cesso quamdiu subsistam, et si supervixerò tibi, cum nomine Patris nostri, Erenualdi, episcopi, tuum ascribo nomen' (Epis. Bonifac. Ed. Serarius).

an 'oblation,' and those who thus offered were said by Tertullian to be 'priests to themselves' (Petavius, De Potest. Consecrandi. c. ii.; cf. also Döllinger, Hist. Ch. Eng. trans. vol. i. p. 223).

Laics also were said to 'offer' because anciently they supplied the elements for the altar, and they were not allowed to communicate unless they had made this oblation. Communicants and offerers thus became identical. But whatever sacerdotal terms were applied to the laity, no one ever dreamed of being able to consecrate the Eucharist.

Tertullian who said, in allusion to what I have mentioned, that where there were no priests a layman was to be 'a priest alone to himself,' assailed the Marcionite heretics for 'putting on laymen the duties of priests' (Prescr. c. xli.). 'In the whole of Christian antiquity it is impossible to find an example of *sacrifice* offered by laics' (Döllinger, *ibid.* p. 224, note).

'The Church,' says S. Augustine, 'immolates the sacrifice of praise in the body of Christ *by the successions of the Apostles*'—*i. e.* by those who succeed the Apostles in the priesthood (Cont. adver. Leg. et Proph. l. i. c. xviii.).

The same Father distinguishes, in the very same passage, between the general priesthood, which all members of the Church share, and that which belongs exclusively to a consecrated order of men: 'They shall be priests of God and of Christ'—this is *not spoken of bishops and presbyters*, who are now properly called priests in the Church; 'but as we are all called Christians on account of our mystical chrism, so also we are all priests' (De Civit. Dei, l. xx. c. x.).

It is through the supernatural relationship existing between Jesus Christ and His body the Church that

there arises a kind of general sacerdotal consanguinity which flows through the entire organisation without distinction; for its members have been 'baptised into Christ,' they have 'put on Christ,' and hence we find expressions like the above in other Fathers recognising this common property of the faithful. Thus S. Ambrose says, '*All the sons of the Church are priests, inasmuch as we are anointed to a holy priesthood*' (Comm. in Lucam, vi. 4); and S. Cyril of Alexandria: 'Thou hast a priesthood because Thou art of a priestly nature' (Comm. in Levit. l. 1-9).

It may be observed in reference to the word 'offer' that its use as a general term, including both the oblation by the priests and by the laity, has a very ancient sanction. When God gave the Law through Moses, He addressed the people in these terms: '*You shall make an altar of earth, and you shall offer upon it your holocausts and peace-offerings*;' although the only actual sacrificers were the officially consecrated priests (Exod. xx. 24). The sons of David also were called 'priests' (2 Kings viii. 18, Heb. and Vulgate, al. 2 Sam., Prot. ver.).

The true participation of the laity in the sacrifice of the Mass is concisely stated in the following passage: 'Christ (as the principal Offerer) offers in a certain way through the ministration of the priest. The priest offers, both because he effects the sacrament by the power of Christ, and because he pronounces the words of consecration in the person of Christ. Lastly, the laity are also offerers, either because they offer through the ministration of the priest, or because they join their intention with his, or because they render some outward service to the priest by supplying what is ne-



cessary for the Mass through their contribution of alms' (Benedict XIV. De Sacrif. l. ii. c. xiii.).

It is worthy also of notice that in the Roman Mass the priest says, 'Pray, brethren, that my sacrifice and *yours* may be acceptable to God the Father;' and he asks God to remember all those present '*for whom we* offer to Thee, or *who offer* to Thee this sacrifice of praise;' also after the consecration he unites himself with 'all Thy holy people' in a joint act of commemoration of the passion, resurrection, and ascension of Christ.

If the deniers of a true Christian sacrifice, in the proper sense of the word, had realised the nature of Christ as the High Priest of the Church, and His relations to it as above described, they would never have fallen into the error of supposing that the Church could offer up nothing but those sacrifices which S. Peter calls 'spiritual:' 'Be you also as living stones built up, a spiritual house, a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ' (1 Pet. ii. 5). S. Paul gives an example of what may be included under the term 'spiritual sacrifices:' 'Let us offer the sacrifice of praise always to God, that is to say, the fruit of lips confessing to His name; and do not forget to do good and to impart, for by *such* sacrifices God's favour is obtained; obey your prelates,' &c. (Heb. xiii. 15-17). The doctrine taught by S. Peter is that our good works will be spiritual oblations and acceptable to God if we are united to Christ as 'living stones,' united, that is, by faith and charity, through the Holy Ghost, and presenting everything through our one Mediator as living members of His body. These are the duties of every Christian: but how can they interfere with the sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ; how can the one kind of sacrifice contradict the other,

or render it superfluous? If, by the nature of the case, or by some express revelation which nowhere exists, it were self-evident that spiritual sacrifices, such as good works, are incompatible with such an external oblation as the Eucharist, the Protestant position might have some force, but not otherwise. It is not unusual to find persons arguing as if it was the discriminating characteristic of the New Law to have no external sacrifice, but only spiritual oblations; and of the Old Law to have an external sacrifice and no spiritual oblation. But this supposition would require us to treat the Old Dispensation as the direct contradictory of the New, instead of being its figure and divinely-arranged preparation; and to assume that as the dispensations are contradictory, so are the sacrifices, and therefore that if Judaism, as a worship, consisted in having an outward sacrifice, Christianity must necessarily have none, for it would otherwise be a form of Judaism, so far at least as the doctrine of an external sacrifice is concerned. But if the Old Law is the type of the New, and if in the Old we find that so far was the spiritual sacrifice from being opposed to that of the altar, that both *co-existed* and were *required* in the Old Law, then the analogy of the ancient dispensation is irresistibly in favour of the Catholic faith.

If there were two kinds of sacrifice under the Law, and both were harmonious, and, indeed, connected with each other, we should naturally look for two correspondent kinds in the Gospel; though both would be of a more elevated character in proportion as the Gospel of grace is superior to the Law, and 'the ministration of the Spirit' is incomparably higher than that of 'condemnation' and 'the letter' (2 Cor. iii. 6-9).

In the Jewish Dispensation there was the external

sacrifice, properly so called, which the official priests alone could offer, with the single exception of the Paschal lamb; and there were the internal acts of religion, or acts which, being in their source internal, manifested themselves outwardly in the life of the people, but were not oblations on any material altar. Of this kind were the offerings of the heart, such as 'an afflicted spirit,'\* that inward surrender of the soul and body to God which the real objective sacrifices of the altar visibly expressed; prayer and praise, mental and vocal; doing good by alms, or other pious works. All these and similar acts were gifts to God, and, as they implied some mortification of the natural man, were called sacrifices. The first class, or the real sacrifice properly so called, suggested this very name, which was applied to the second class by way of similitude and analogy. The origin of the identity of name is indicated by the Psalmist when he says, 'Let my prayer be directed *as* incense in Thy sight; the lifting up of my hands *as* evening sacrifice' (Ps. cxl. 2). Here the allusion is to the sacrificial incense of the altar and the offering of the slain lamb. The similitude also becomes a metaphor, as in the expression, 'We will render the *calves* of our lips' (Osee xiv. 3).

The internal acts of the soul were appropriately called *sacrifices*, because they were intended by God always to accompany the material sacrifices: they were to be what thought is to language; so that a sacrifice of sheep or oxen, or fruits of agriculture, offered by a Jew, without the interior disposition of submission, was a kind of hypocrisy: it was a visible practical lie presented to God on His own altar as a religious truth.

\* 'A sacrifice to God is an afflicted spirit; a contrite and humble heart. O God, Thou wilt not despise' (Ps. l. 19).

Hence the fact that the sacrifices of the Old Law typified Christ was not sufficient of itself to make the oblation pleasing to God; He required the offering of the heart besides. 'The visible sacrifice' was, as S. Augustine said, 'a sacrament, that is, a sacred sign of the invisible' (De Civit. l. x. c. v.). The distinction between a mere material sacrifice, and one united with that inner disposition of the offerer, which ought to have accompanied it, is clearly marked in the following passages: 'The *victims of the wicked* are abominable to the Lord: the vows of the just are acceptable' (Prov. xv. 8). 'Much better is obedience than the victims of fools who know not what evil they do' (Eccl. iv. 17). God, speaking through the prophet Osee, says, 'I desired mercy, and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than holocausts' (vi. 6). The meaning here is not to contrast mercy with sacrifice, as if they were terms which excluded one another; but to declare that the mere physical act of immolating a victim in sacrifice was offensive to God, unless that act was spiritualised by the virtue of 'mercy' in the offerer. It is a similar mode of expression to that of 'rend your hearts, and *not* your garments' (Joel ii. 13). There is no prohibition contained in the latter words against 'rending garments,' but the people are warned that such an action without the 'rending of the heart' will not be true penitence. Mourning is positively enjoined in the very preceding verse: 'Be converted to Me with all your heart, in fasting, and in weeping, and in mourning;' now to tear the garments was a customary mode of mourning, which was sanctioned by God. Thus the king of Juda is praised: 'Thou, reverencing My face, hast *rent thy garments*, and wept before Me: I also have heard thee, saith the Lord' (2 Paral. xxxiv. 27,

al. Chron. Prot. vers.). When, therefore, we meet with such expressions as that just cited from Osee and such as that in the Psalms, 'If Thou hadst desired sacrifice, I would have given it; with burnt-offerings Thou wilt not be delighted' (L. 18), it must not be supposed, that by this language external sacrifices were condemned, or intended to be put aside, in order to give place to internal sacrifices, as if they were contradictory alternatives. Nothing could be more untrue than such an interpretation of Scripture. God only denounced the external sacrifices of victims when the proper disposition of the soul which they were designed to symbolise was wilfully absent. Thus Samuel rebuked Saul for the sacrifices which he had unlawfully offered up to God out of the flocks of Agag, which ought to have been destroyed: 'Doth the Lord desire holocausts and victims, and *not rather* that the voice of the Lord should be obeyed?' (1 Kings xv. 22, al. Samuel, Prot. vers.) Yet in the next chapter we are told that when Samuel went to anoint David with 'the Spirit of the Lord,' he prepared for this solemn act by sacrifice: 'I am come to offer sacrifice to the Lord' (xvi. 5).

Prayer also was most fitly called 'sacrifice,' both because it accompanied the altar-sacrifices, and because it was peculiarly represented by the fragrance and ascent heavenwards of the sacrificial incense which was consumed by holy fire, in honour of, and as an intercession with, God. Isaias, in his vision, heard the seraphim crying one to another, 'Holy, holy, holy,' and the temple was 'filled with smoke' (Is. vi. 3, 4); and S. John speaks of the twenty-four ancients with 'vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the saints' (Apoc. v. 8).

Good works of various kinds were called sacrifices,

both because they were the fruits of that dedication of soul and body which the altar-oblation symbolised, and also probably for another reason,—because the altar-sacrifices were required as a necessary condition, without which the piety of the Jews would not have been meritorious in the sight of God. For these sacrifices were not merely a visible form of prayer or self-dedication, and nothing more; they were a public acknowledgment of the sovereignty of God, of the absolute dependence of the creature, his confession of guilt, and his need of reconciliation, pardon, and union with God. The sacrifices also proclaimed ever the want of that all-sufficient Mediator, Whose certain advent they equally predicted, and without Whom no works can be pleasing to God. Thus the good works of the Jew were sacrificial, inasmuch as they were dependent, more or less, according to the covenant of God, for their acceptability in His sight, upon the altar-sacrifices, through which the foreseen merits of Christ were virtually applied to the faithful Israelite, according to that measure of grace of which he was capable under the Jewish dispensation.

What Judaism was in figure, the Christian Church is in reality; and although there is an immense distinction between the two in point of excellence, there are so many principles common to each—just as we should expect would be the case where the two stand towards each other as type and antitype, shadow and substance, seed and fully developed tree—that a reference to the constitution of the former is an invaluable key to our understanding of the latter.

Hence, as in the Jewish dispensation there was a moral connection between the altar-sacrifices and those of the soul of the worshippers, so in the Christian Church there is a close union between the one sacrifice

of the altar and those others which are the immolations of the souls of the faithful, linked in unity with the entire Church. Christ is the High Priest Who offers up both kinds; for as we can offer up the Eucharist only through and with Him, by means of His priests, so the spiritual sacrifices of our thoughts, lips, and actions, and of our bodies, which are to be 'a living sacrifice' (Rom. xii. 1), can be presented and 'acceptable to God' only through Jesus Christ, Who, in this oblation, as in that of the Mass, is our only 'Mediator between God and man.' So far is the Mass from obscuring the doctrine of the necessity of that kind of sacrifice to which S. Peter alludes, that it is the most powerful means conceivable for both impressing, on all who believe in or assist at its celebration, the duty of self-sacrifice, and for deepening daily in their minds the mighty truth, that through Christ's merits and intercession alone it is that we can draw near to the Throne of mercy and peace.

One amongst other objects of the Mass is to profess and to obtain grace to accomplish and increase our dedication to God. In the Roman Missal, the priest prays that 'we, being assisted by the help of Thy mercy, may be always free from sin;' and in the ancient Gallican Missal there is the following supplication: 'O Lord, be appeased, and bend down towards the sacrifice which is to be offered to Thee; may it thoroughly cleanse us from the iniquities of our condition, and make us acceptable to Thy name.'

The complete idea of self-oblation in reference to the Eucharist is expressed with exquisite brevity and beauty by S. Augustine in the following passage, where he says that by the 'daily sacrifice the Church, being the body of the Head Himself, *learns* to offer herself through Him' (De Civ. Dei, l. x. c. xx.).

It is interesting, in connection with the term 'spiritual sacrifice' as denoting the oblation of prayer, to remember that S. Ephraim Syrus, after his death, was invoked for his intercession by S. Gregory of Nyssa, as 'being present at the altar of God, and with His angels offering sacrifice to the Prince of Life and the most Holy Trinity;' and that S. Basil is also described, in a panegyric of him by S. Gregory of Nazianzum, as 'being in heaven, offering up sacrifices for us, pouring out prayers for the people, for he has not left so as to have deserted us' (Orat. xx. De Laud. S. Basil). But the same Fathers, who spoke of such sacrifices as these being offered by the souls of glorified saints in bliss, not only believed in and taught the doctrine of the Mass as the great visible sacrifice upon earth, but commemorated the saints, and implored their intercession in the very act of celebrating the august mystery of the Christian altar.

It seems, indeed, to be strangely assumed by the opponents of the Catholic doctrine, that the mere expression itself—'spiritual sacrifices'—excludes the Catholic Mass: as if the Mass, being in one respect visible, were therefore non-spiritual. This is a perfectly arbitrary contrast, which has no foundation in fact or in Scripture.

What could be a more spiritual oblation than that of Him of Whose words alone it has been said that they are 'spirit and they are life'? Was the sacrifice on the Cross not spiritual because the visible Body of the Redeemer hung upon it? The Mass is spiritual in a variety of ways. Christ Himself is God; His personality is spirit, and the humanity has no personality, except that which it possesses by union with the God-head: Christ is present on the altar through the Holy



Spirit; it is by the power of the Spirit that the consecration takes place, and it is effected ministerially by means of priests, who have received the Spirit for the very purpose of the consecration: the Body and Blood are present substantially, but rather after the manner of a spirit than of a body. For the Body of Christ, although retaining its natural extension of parts, is present in the sacrament by a mode which excludes extension. The whole is under every separate portion of the species, and under the whole of the species, separated or not, by a simultaneous diffusion which does not impair the integrity of the substance, nor the integrity of the presence.

Moreover, unlike all other substances, the Body of Christ does not receive the species by inhesion or adhesion, and physically sustain them, for they are sustained as a veil over the Body, by an especial law of the Divine power.

Christ is also a spiritual Victim, as being the true antitypical oblation of the New Law, in contrast with the carnal and figurative sacrifices of the Old Law. For in the words of S. Leo, 'The oblation of the one Body and Blood of Christ completes all the difference of the victims' (De Pass. Dom. serm. viii.); in other words, it is the one perfect sacrifice, in which the various kinds of the ancient sacrifices and the various victims all terminate, and are all extinguished, leaving it upon the earth as their sole end and fulfilment.

S. Hippolytus, who flourished in the early part of the third century, distinctly calls the first Eucharist that was ever celebrated a 'spiritual sacrifice;' 'the only-begotten Christ, the first High Priest, did not seize to Himself that honour, but was constituted by the Father. He having become Man for us, and offering

to His own God and Father the *spiritual sacrifice* before His passion, gave to us alone [*i.e.* the Apostles] the commission to *do this*, although there were others, like unto us, who had believed in Him, but not by any means was every one that believed appointed at once a priest' (De Charismatibus Trad. Apost. n. 26). The oblation of Christ is called in the Alexandrian liturgy 'this *spiritual sacrifice*,' 'wherein is not the blood of the Law, nor carnal righteousness—but the Lamb is indeed *spiritual*.' So also the Coptic: 'Make us worthy to offer to Thee this holy, reasonable, *spiritual*, and unbloody sacrifice.' It is often called 'supercelestial' and 'intellectual,' as not being visible to the senses; the Alexandrian liturgy speaks of the consecration being by an 'intellectual sword.' In the old Gallican liturgy there is a prayer that the '*spiritual Victim*' may be accepted 'in the odour of sweetness;' and in S. Cyril of Jerusalem we find the following: 'We call upon God to send forth His Holy Spirit, . . . in order that He may make the bread Christ's Body, and the wine Christ's Blood; . . . then after the *spiritual sacrifice* is perfected, the *unbloody worship*, we upon that sacrifice of propitiation beseech God for the common peace of the Churches' (V. Catech. Mystag.). So Theodoret, in reference to S. Paul (Heb. x. 9), says, 'He called the first the sacrifice of irrational animals, but that which follows, the *spiritual sacrifice*, which was offered up by Himself' (Interpret. in loc.).

Whether, therefore, we understand the passage from S. Peter to mean only the pious works of the 'living stones' of that 'spiritual house' the Church or the mystical Christ, and thus distinguish these sacrifices from the visible Eucharist, according to a saying of Lactantius, that 'whoever does anything good sacri-

fices' (Instit. l. vi. c. xxiv.); or whether we include the Mass amongst the 'spiritual sacrifices' of the whole Church, the passage from S. Peter is in perfect harmony with the Catholic doctrine. The two kinds of sacrifices are clearly distinguished in a remarkable passage of S. Cyprian, which shows that there was one kind which could only be offered by duly consecrated priests. S. Cyprian is consoling the martyrs who were in prison, and he argues in this manner: he tells them that faith will not suffer loss, even 'although liberty is *not* now granted to the priests of God, to offer and celebrate the divine sacrifices. Yea, do ye celebrate and offer a sacrifice to God both precious and glorious, . . . seeing that the divine Scripture declares that *a sacrifice to God is an afflicted spirit*' (Ep. lxxvii. Ad Nemesianum).

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## CHAPTER XII.

### THE PROPITIATORY CHARACTER OF THE SACRIFICE.

A DIFFICULTY is sometimes raised with regard to the oblation of Christ in the Mass which could never have perplexed the minds of objectors, if they had reflected upon the twofold nature of our Lord. How, it has been asked, can Christ offer Himself on earth to Himself in heaven? For if He is God, and the Mass can be offered only to God, then He must offer sacrifice to Himself. This, however, if it be an argument against the Eucharistic Sacrifice, is equally valid against the sacrifice on the Cross, and the answer to one difficulty is the answer to the other. Christ is one person, but with two natures: a divine nature and a human na-

ture. As God, He is one nature, with the Father and the Holy Ghost; He therefore receives the sacrifice *according to that nature*, and He receives it equally with the Father and the Holy Ghost, because the Three Persons are one God. He does not receive it by virtue of being the Second Person as distinguished from the First and Third, but according to that unity of substance by which all the Three are one God. Hence, in the concluding prayer of the Roman Mass, the priest thus addresses God: 'May the homage of my service please Thee, *O Holy Trinity*; and grant that the sacrifice which I, unworthy, have offered before the eyes of *Thy Majesty*, may be acceptable to Thee.'

Whilst, however, Christ as God receives the Eucharistic oblation, He at the same time offers it, and is offered in it, according to His nature as man, by virtue of which nature He has a real human soul, and a real will distinct from the will of His divine nature. 'Although in His form of God (*i.e.* as being God) He receives sacrifice, together with the Father, with Whom He is one God, nevertheless He preferred in His form of servant (*i.e.* as being man) to be a sacrifice, rather than to offer sacrifice' (August. *De Civ. Dei*, l. x. c. xx.). Thus, although He Who receives and He Who offers is the same Christ, because He is the same person, since the human nature has no other personality than the divine, nevertheless there is no confusion nor contradiction of any kind. For He Who, being ever the same identical person and one God, can receive sacrifice according to His higher nature, can, according to His lower nature, be at the same time both sacrificing priest and victim sacrificed. All who believe that Christ offered a satisfaction on the Cross, which derived its value from His being God and man in one

person, must adopt the above solution of the great Christian mystery of the Atonement.

The principle of the mediation of Christ, by which 'God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself' (2 Cor. v. 19), is clearly stated in the following passage: 'Although Christ is one physical person, He is, however, on account of His divine nature and His free human nature, a double moral person, since He being one and the same is adored, as to one of His natures, and is an adorer, as to the other; according to the one He receives obedience, merit, and satisfaction; according to the other He exercises and offers them: and thus between Himself, formally, as He is God, and between us men who are to be reconciled, He Himself mediates formally, as He is man, both by the nature which has been hypostatically assumed from us, and also by the operation, merit, and satisfaction of this nature' (Franzelin, *De Verbo Incarn.* p. 495).

With regard to the possibility of Christ both accepting and offering sacrifice, although He is only one person physically, the doctrine of the Mass introduces no new element of difficulty which requires a new solution. There is, however, one difference which may be appropriately mentioned in this part of the subject. The sacrifice on the Cross was a propitiation for the sins of the world; and since the same Christ is presented in the Mass in a victim-state, the Mass is truly said to be propitiatory. But this distinction is to be remembered: Christ is no longer in a passible and mortal condition; He has entered 'into heaven itself,' and having offered 'one sacrifice for sins for ever sitteth at the right hand of God' (Heb. x. 12). Hence no number of oblations by Christ can *add* anything to that merit and satisfaction of Christ, on account of which

He originally obtained eternal life for the entire human race—this gift being *actually* bestowed upon those persons alone who shall have individually fulfilled all the conditions ordained by Christ. For although ‘God our Saviour will have all men to be saved,’ and ‘gave Himself a redemption for all’ (1 Tim. ii. 4-6); nevertheless to those who do not obey His conditions, the odour of His knowledge will be ‘the odour of death unto death’ (2 Cor. ii. 15).

If, then, no new merit and no new satisfaction issue from Christ and are treasured in the Mass, how is it a propitiatory sacrifice? Because the propitiatory power of Christ is derived from the infinite value and dignity of Himself, as the mediatorial person and the mediatorial sacrifice, on account of whose merits God has pardoned the human race.

This infinite value of mediation is *in* the Mass, because Christ Himself is there; and not only there by any kind of presence, but by a sacrificial mode of presence, repeating mystically, and commemorating, His sacrifice on the Cross. He is there as the Mediator offering sacrifice, and, through that oblation, interceding with God, by presenting to His merciful contemplation the merits and the satisfaction already offered by Himself when He was in the passible condition of this mortal life, and when, therefore, He was able both to merit and to satisfy in the strictest, truest, and highest manner possible, and in every act.

Hence the Mass has been called by S. Augustine the ‘Sacrifice of the Mediator’ (De Octo. Dulcit. Quæs. n. 4) and the ‘Sacrifice of our Ransom’ (Confess. ix. c. xii.). The propitiatory value of the Mass does not, therefore (so far as our Lord is concerned in His office as principal Sacrificer), depend upon any merit or satisfaction that has

an actuation in each Mass, for such new and successive actuation cannot take place for the reason above given—the incapacity of meriting further. The propitiation springs both from the inherent dignity of Christ's person, and from the meritorious obedience which He rendered to His Heavenly Father during His life, and which was perfected by the death upon the Cross. In consequence of the relation that exists between each Mass—in which Christ, with all His inseparable dignity and merits is sacrificially present, although no longer able to merit again—and the sacrifice of the Cross, which as an act is past for ever, the Mass is propitiatory; but as a mode of *intercession and impetration*, and not, like that on the Cross, as offering to God any new satisfaction of Christ distinct from that which He has offered 'once for all.'

'There is this difference between the sacrifice of the Mass and that of the Cross, so far as each is offered by Christ: the sacrifice of the Cross was meritorious, satisfactory, and impetratory, truly and properly, because Christ was then mortal, and able to merit and satisfy; the sacrifice of the Mass is, strictly speaking, impetratory *only*, because Christ is now immortal, and can neither merit nor satisfy. When it is called propitiatory or satisfactory, it must be understood with reference to the object which is impetrated. It is called propitiatory because it impetrates remission of a fault; satisfactory, because it impetrates remission of punishment; meritorious, because it impetrates the grace to act well and to acquire merits' (Bellarminus, *De Missâ*, lib. ii. c. iv.).

As the term 'impetration' usually signifies the act by which we appeal to the liberality of God, and implore aid on that especial ground, it may be useful to explain that something more than this is meant when the Mass

is called propitiatory: it impetrates by moving the clemency of God; it appeases and inclines Him to turn away His anger that has been justly caused by sin. The Council of Trent, after stating that the Mass is propitiatory, because the same Christ Who offered Himself upon the Cross 'is contained in this divine sacrifice,' expresses itself in the following words: 'this sacrifice is truly propitiatory, and that through it it is effected that if we draw near to God, with a true heart and right faith, with fear and reverence, being contrite, we obtain mercy and find grace in seasonable help. God, indeed, *being appeased* by the oblation of this sacrifice, granting grace and the gift of repentance, forgives crimes and sins, even though they are great' (Sess. xxii. c. xi.; also cf. De Lugo, De Euch. Disp. xix. § 9, n. 141). The Mass, considered exclusively in its character of a sacrifice, does not remit the guilt of sins, by directly imparting sanctifying grace, like Baptism or Absolution, but by propitiating God and pleading for His grace, so that, with the due coöperation of the will, the sinner may arrive at the state of true penitence and be forgiven. What, however, the Mass as a sacrifice is unable to effect directly in regard to the *guilt* of sins, it is able to accomplish in respect to the temporal punishment that still remains as a debt to be satisfied, after the guilt of the sins has been pardoned in the sacrament of penance, and the eternal punishment due to them remitted. 'Because it applies the satisfaction of Christ, by which that debt is paid and compensated for. The condonation of punishment, after the will has withdrawn itself from sin; can fitly be granted, and does not require any change in a man' (Lessius, De Perf. Div. l. xii. c. xiv. n. 102).

Of the really propitiatory nature of the Mass there has never been the shadow of a doubt in the Church, al-



though theologians have differed in unessential points as to the precise mode of understanding it, and the best scientific form of explanation. 'Christ offers and is offered,' says S. Ambrose, 'in order that He may forgive us our sins' (De Offic. c. xlviii.). 'In the many sacrifices that were offered for sins (*i.e.* in the Old Dispensation), this one sacrifice of ours is signified, in which there is a true remission of sins' (August. Quæst. lvii. in Levit.). The various ancient liturgies of the Catholic Church, as well as of the oriental heretical communities, abound in expressions such as 'victim of pacification,' 'propitiatory sacrifice;' and the sacrifice is represented as offered equally for the dead and for the living. 'I will offer to Thee this unbloody and reasonable sacrifice' (the word *reasonable*, it may be observed, has been interpreted by some of the Fathers to mean 'endowed with reason,' in contrast with the irrational victims of the Old Law), 'for the remission of my sins, the pardon of the faults of the people, and the rest and refreshment of our fathers who have slept' (Liturg. Syr. Gregorii). As every liturgy without exception expresses the same ideas, it is not necessary to give more quotations, which would only illustrate what the Council of Trent has said: 'Wherefore not only for the sins, punishments, satisfactions, and other necessities of the living, is the offering made, rightly and according to the traditions of the Apostles, but also for those who, having died in Christ, have not as yet been completely purified' (Sess. xxii. c. xi.).

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS, AND CONCLUSION.

IN reference to the propitiatory nature of the Mass, the Council observes, that so far is this sacrifice from derogating *in any way whatever* from the bloody offering of the Cross, that on the contrary it is through 'the unbloody oblation that the fruits of the bloody oblation are most copiously received.' There are, indeed, few more painful perversions of truth than the attempt which is so frequently made to establish an irreconcilable opposition between the two sacrifices, as if one could not be believed in without disparagement to the other. It would be just as reasonable to complain that the light which the sun diffuses through the atmosphere of the earth, and the vitality and fertility thus produced, are derogatory to the sun itself. Principal causes do not require the abolition of secondary causes; it is through the latter that the former act, and render their virtue capable of being applied in particular instances. 'Who can doubt that perfect and principal causes can effect nothing, without others which assist and are proximate? Medicine, although at hand and curative, if not applied, can neither bring help to the man who is in need of it, nor a cure' (Melchior Canus, De Loc. Theol. lib. xii. c. xi.).

The Eucharist, although the highest in dignity and power, is only one of many other modes ordained by the Divine Wisdom for applying to each individual practically the fruits of that oblation which, considered in itself as a life-giving universal cause, is more than equal to any actual or conceivable want of a fallen race.

If the sacrifice on the Cross were sufficient for *every*

purpose without the concurrence of any other conditions, then *all* other conditions would be superfluous, and not only superfluous, but, if the Protestant theory were true, would be derogatory to the completeness of the work accomplished on Calvary. 'If the Lamb Who takes away the sin of the world has by Himself expiated *our* iniquities (*i.e.* individually), without any coöperating or accompanying cause, let baptism go, penance vanish, priesthoods and ministrations cease, and so let every sacrament and instrument of our salvation be removed' (Canus, *ibid.*).

It need scarcely be added, that although the value of the Mass is infinite, and its effects are infallible, so far as they depend upon the principal Offerer, Christ, yet the positive fruits are modified by the dispositions of the human instruments who take part in the sacrifice, whether priests or laity; by the particular purpose for which the Mass is offered, over and above the general object which does not vary; and also by the special designs and operations of that superintending Providence of God which governs the world, but which is beyond our calculation. Thus the infinite becomes, as it were, refracted into finite rays by the very nature of the atmosphere which is the sphere of its actual exercise.

#### IDENTITY AND MULTIPLICITY OF THE MASS.

Some misconception arises occasionally as to the meaning of Catholics when they say that the sacrifice of the Mass is one and the same with that of the Cross; and also when, whilst affirming the oneness of the Christian Eucharist, they speak of the numberless *sacrifices* that are perpetually being in course of celebration.

The Mass is said to be the same sacrifice as that which was offered upon the Cross, because the idea of a sacrifice includes in its conception the victim, the priest offering, and the act of oblation—all combined. In the Old Law the priest, whilst he was alive and capable, remained personally the same, but the victims were changed at every oblation, so that there were different victims and different acts of oblation; the priests were necessarily distinct from each other, and they died by the law of nature. No one Jewish sacrifice, therefore, could be said to be identical with any other; it was an impossibility. But in the New Law unity reigns over diversity. 'We always offer the same; that is, not now one sheep and to-morrow another, but we always offer the same; therefore there is one sacrifice. Since we offer in many places, are there, then, many Christs? By no means, but everywhere one Christ. Since, therefore, He Who is offered in many places is one Body, not many bodies, so also there is one sacrifice' (Chrysost. in Heb. Hom. xvii. n. 3). There is only one Priest, Jesus Christ, and only one priesthood; this priest never dies, and this priesthood can never be changed. The same individual Christ Who offered the unbloody sacrifice of the Eucharist the eve before His passion offered the bloody sacrifice on the day of His passion. We shall understand what the oneness of His priesthood is if we consider its inseparable relationship to Himself. Christ had not two priesthoods any more than He had two persons, or had two souls, or two bodies. He was the one Priest because He was one as the God-man; and He was one as the God-man by the union of His humanity with the one Person of the Godhead. The Second Person of the Trinity was not a priest before He became man. 'There is one Mediator of God and

man, the MAN Christ Jesus' (1 Tim. ii. 5). As the Son of Man willed to become man that He might offer Himself, suffer, and die for us, the Incarnation (which was the realisation of this will in effect, and at the appointed time) was His actual consecration as the High Priest of God and man.

As His priesthood was one, so His sacrificial oblation was one; and since that was Himself, the sacrifice of Christ was such as had never in the history of the world any parallel with itself; because all other priests were distinct from the victims which they offered, and the victims were in nature inferior to themselves; as inferior as animals and vegetables are to reasoning man, made 'in the image of God.' If Abraham had actually sacrificed Isaac, that would have been the nearest approach to a similitude. Abraham, however, was not identical with his own son; so that we look in vain amongst types for any that gives us even the idea of that perfect unity between priest and sacrifice that was the *effect of the Incarnation*. The Son of God became the Christ, the 'Anointed,' by becoming man; for the Godhead by assuming the humanity anointed (literally *Christed*) it: 'He was anointed as King and as Priest' (Augustin. in Ps. xxvi.).

'The pontifical dignity was attributed to Him *after He had assumed the nature of man*' (Epiphanius, Hær. lxi. n. 38). 'Every high priest *taken from among men* is ordained . . . that he may offer gifts and sacrifices for sin' (Heb. v. 1). 'From among men' refers 'to the Incarnation' (Epiphan.). 'The Word became High Priest after taking a created body,' says S. Athanasius; and Tertullian calls Jesus Christ 'the Catholic (*i.e.* universal) Priest of the Father' (Petavius, Th. Dogm. lib. xii. c. xi. s. 5, 6). The

unbloody sacrifice, therefore, of Christ in the Eucharist is connected by an ineffably close union with His bloody sacrifice on the Cross, for Christ Himself is the bond of connection by the unity of His person as the God-man, and by the oneness of His Priesthood, together with the oneness of the Victim which He offers, and which is Himself.

Thus the two sacrifices, the unbloody and the bloody, were the twofold exercise and manifestation of the same one sacerdotal office by the same one High Priest. The sacrifice of the Eucharist and that of the Cross were distinguished from each other, numerically, as actions taking place at different times; and also specifically, the one being commemorative, and the other not: nevertheless, their unity far transcends their diversity.

‘There is also an obvious distinction between the first Eucharist as offered by Christ, and the Eucharist as now offered by His ministers. Each is the same in species, not only by reason of the Victim, but also by reason of the sacrificial action and mode of offering: “*This* do for a commemoration of Me.” Nevertheless, not only are there accidental differences of time, place, ceremonies, &c., but there is a difference in respect to the visible priest, to merit in the Principal Offerer, and to the Victim, Who *was* once mortal, and is now immortal; also there is a difference in regard to the mystical signification’ (Franzelin. De Euch. p. 395). ‘If a question be raised about the numerical distinction of sacrifices, this is derived rather from a distinction in the sacrificial *action* than from a distinction of the victims and the priesthood. Hence, not only ought the sacrifice of the Cross, of the Last Supper, and of the altar, but even the daily sacrifices on the altar, to be called absolutely *many* and distinct; whilst the sacrifice

is only to be called *one* when the declaration is added, that it is so termed on account of the Victim and of the Principal Offerer' (ibid. p. 396).

In bringing these observations on the sacrifice of the Mass to a close, I wish to observe that I am quite aware that there are many other points of much interest that I have not treated with the fulness which they merit, and many which I have not even touched at all.

It is a vast as well as a stupendous subject, and the more it is studied the more do the vistas in every direction grow under the eye. My chief aim has been to meet some of those objections which are usually found to exercise an adverse influence upon the minds of those who are outside the Catholic Church, and at the same time to give, for the benefit of my Catholic readers such explanations upon certain aspects of the doctrine of the Mass as my own reflection and experience lead me to consider useful for their own instruction, and also for the vindication of the faith when it is assailed by those who have a just claim upon them to a serious reply. It will be no slight gain if what I have written on this subject should induce any non-Catholics to reflect how much of their antagonism arises from a misconception of the true doctrine of Catholics upon the Mass, and how utterly irreconcilable their own views are with the whole belief and teaching of the ancient Church on a matter which was no speculative opinion, nor a doctrine occasionally brought before the minds of the members of the Church, but one which, like the blood in the human body, 'which is the life,' was an all-pervading element in the creed and daily worship of the Christian kingdom.

Take away the dogma of the Christian sacrifice from the Church, and one of the most powerful evidences of

the historical truth of Christianity would fall to the ground: with it the priesthood would go, and all that is involved in the sacramental system; the Church, as a divine institution, would have no office to fulfil; she would have no unity in the past, the present, or the future. She would be as illusive as any fancy born out of the brain, and as human as any society extemporised by a private individual to propagate his own subjective religion, or constructed by statesmen for a merely political end.

According to the prophecy of Daniel xii. 11, one of the terrible scourges which Antichrist will inflict when he comes at the end of the world will be the forced suppression of the 'continual sacrifice,' which many of the Fathers interpret to mean the Mass; and if this be true, the doctrinal banishment of it from the Christian belief and worship bears upon its front, however unconsciously on the part of those who hold such an opinion, an ominous sign of fellowship with that enemy of Christ who is to be destroyed 'with the brightness of His coming' (2 Thess. ii. 8).

Take away the Mass, and it would follow that Christianity was grossly and totally misunderstood by the very earliest of its disciples from the commencement of its existence, so far as that existence can be ascertained by documentary evidence; for there is no ancient form of Christian worship in which the sacrifice of Christ present in His real Body and Blood upon the altar is not the essential feature. 'We offer unto Thee, O Lord, this tremendous and unbloody sacrifice; . . . send down this Thy most Holy Spirit, . . . that He may make this bread the holy Body of Thy Christ, . . . and this cup the precious Blood of Christ' (Liturgy of Jerusalem). 'Turn not away, O God, from us sinners who



offer to Thee this awful and unbloody sacrifice' (Lit. Alexandria). 'Make this bread the precious Body of Thy Christ, . . . and what is in this chalice the precious Blood of Thy Christ' (Constantinop.). 'This chalice, . . . the redeeming Blood, the atoning Blood which was shed for the redemption and life of the world' (Syriac). 'Receive, O most merciful Father, this holy bread, that it may be made the Body of Thine only-begotten Son. . . Receive, O Holy Trinity, this chalice, wine mixed with water, that it may be made the Blood of Thine only-begotten Son' (Ambrosian). 'We offer to Thee this living, acceptable, glorious, and unbloody sacrifice. . . May the Holy Spirit make this oblation . . . . . the Body and Blood of Christ' (Nestorius). These are only scanty specimens of the language of the ancient liturgies, but conclusive as to the sacrifice of the Eucharist being the faith of the early Christians. There is not a single Eastern community, which has any continuity with the ancient bodies, that does not celebrate the Mass. Yet what, indeed, can be more incredible than to imagine that the revealed religion of Christ, that for which He became man, and died, and rose again, to institute in the world, should become corrupt to the core on a fundamental point of faith and adoration as soon as ever it came forth embodied in that living society, which is to Christianity what the body is to the soul!

To be struck with a mortal sickness at its birth would have been a fate that would have degraded the Christian Dispensation far below the 'needy elements' of the Jewish Law which it came to replace.

Lastly, whilst the more attentively the Mass is contemplated, the more widely will its theological ramifications be found to extend, so also the more closely will

it be perceived to be associated, as a vital part of the Christian religion, with the atoning Sacrifice of the Cross—‘the fruits of which bloody oblation are most abundantly received through this one which is unbloody; so far is the latter from derogating in any way whatever from the former’ (Conc. Trid. sess. xxii. c. xi.). The doctrine of the Atonement by the Blood of Christ is closely connected with both the divinity and the humanity of the Mediator, and it is not without reason that the Fathers have frequently defended the true nature of our Lord by appealing to the Catholic faith in the Eucharist.

Thus S. Ignatius argues from it against the Docetæ, who did not believe that our Lord had a real body: ‘They abstain from the Eucharist and prayer because they confess not that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ, the flesh which suffered for our sins’ (Ep. ad Smyrn. n. 7); S. Irenæus against the Gnostics, Tertullian against the Marcionites, S. Ambrose against the Arians: ‘Dost thou recognise the sacrament of the Lord’s death, and dost thou slander His divinity?’ (l. iv. De Fide); Theodoret against the Eutychians; and S. Augustine against the Manichees.

The same divine revelation that manifests the God-man to us offering Himself up once by death manifests Him to us as instituting another mode of oblation according to which He sacrifices Himself, again and again, without undergoing death. To reject Him as Priest and Sacrifice in the second kind of oblation, and to confess Him as Priest and Sacrifice in the first kind, is as much a denial of Christ as it would be to reject the sacrifice of the Cross, and confess the sacrifice of the Mass. Both stand and fall together: to take one and not the other is to mutilate the perfection of Christ’s

mediatorial office ; it is to divide what He has joined together ; it is to break the unity of His dispensation of mercy ; it is to hang salvation in the heavens out of reach, and to cut off one of the most important of the means by which it descends to man in the shape of grace and union with his Redeemer ; it is to proclaim the merits of Christ, and then—by a fatally erroneous misapplication of the dogma which truly asserts the sufficiency of the expiation on the Cross for the sins of the whole world—to seal up the fountain itself at its very source.

**COMMUNION IN ONE KIND.**



## CHAPTER I.

### THE ARGUMENT FROM SCRIPTURE

It is often said that because our Lord, in giving the chalice at the institution of the Holy Eucharist, said, 'Drink ye *all* of this,' the Roman custom of communicating the laity only in one kind, and refusing the chalice, is anti-scriptural. This argument, however, proves too much, and involves consequences that are not always anticipated by the objector. The words, 'Drink ye all of this,' were spoken to the same persons to whom it was said at the same time, '*Do this for a commemoration of Me.*' The drinkers of that chalice were to be the future consecrators of the bread and wine. They were the same upon whom the Holy Ghost was to descend, and who were to have the power to remit and retain sins.

If the commandment, 'Drink ye all,' is binding by divine authority on *all* Christians, then not only all Christians have the right of partaking of the holy chalice, but they have the right to consecrate both the bread and the chalice; not only so, but if it is a precept, and not a mere permission, they are solemnly *bound* to consecrate as well as to communicate; and if the word 'all' is to be unlimited, then women and even children are under this obligation. Such a logical result of the favourite Protestant argument will be disowned by Episcopalians, and I doubt if in any Non-conformist body the duty of consecration is held to be binding on the whole community. As our Lord was

not merely communicating the Apostles, but teaching them how to follow His example, it is obvious why He mentioned the word 'all' in connection with the chalice, and not with the bread. He 'brake' the bread, and distributed it to each with His own hands; but there was only one chalice, and it was necessary to tell the Apostles beforehand that they must all drink a portion, it being probably passed round from one to another.

If also it is a mutilation of the Sacrament to receive it only in one kind, why do we find so frequent a mention of the Eucharistic bread without any reference to the Eucharistic wine? When our Lord revealed Himself to the two disciples going to Emmaus, there is no allusion to their partaking of any chalice: 'It came to pass, whilst He was at table with them, He took bread, and blessed, and brake, and gave to them' (Luke xxiv. 30). That this was no ordinary meal is evident from the minute way in which the Evangelist records the blessing, breaking and giving: and the effect moreover was miraculous; their eyes were opened, 'and they knew Him; and He vanished out of their sight.' Their supernatural knowledge was connected intimately with that 'breaking of bread;' for when they returned to the Apostles, to bear testimony that they had actually seen the risen Christ, they added 'how they knew Him *in the breaking of bread*' (ver. 35). S. Augustine says that our Lord allowed the eyes of these disciples to be held by Satan 'up to the sacrament of the bread, in order that by partaking of the unity of His Body it might be understood that the hindrance of the enemy was removed, so that Christ may be acknowledged' (De Consens. Ev. l. iii. c. xxv.).

What is the first characteristic description of the

earliest members of the Apostolic Church? That 'they were baptised; . . . that they were persevering in the doctrine of the Apostles, and in the *communication of the breaking of bread*, and in prayers' (Acts ii. 42).

If this breaking of bread were not a peculiar sacramental act, distinctive of the Christians, why is it narrated as one of the features of the new community together with baptism and unity of the faith? And if so, why is there no allusion to the chalice if *all* partook of that by any law of Christian obligation?

We find another assembly of Christians (Acts xx. 7-11), where there is an obvious reference to the Eucharist: the gathering was at Troas, 'on the first day of the week;' the object is specially mentioned: 'we were assembled *to break bread*;' the chamber was an upper room, and it is particularly noted, as though the occurrence was of an unusually solemn kind, that 'there were a great number of lamps.' In the course of S. Paul's sermon Eutyches fell from the third loft, and was restored to life by the contact of the Apostle's body with the corpse. After this wonderful miracle we are informed, as though it were a matter of scarcely inferior importance, that S. Paul went back into the upper room, and brake bread. Here again there is not a word about assembling that all might drink of the Eucharistic chalice.

S. Paul implies that the Christians were at liberty to receive in one kind, and would be guilty of no violation of the law of Christ, in his Epistle to the Corinthians: 'As often as ye shall eat this bread *and* drink the chalice, you shall show forth the Lord's death until He come; therefore whosoever shall eat this bread *or* drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord' (1 Cor. xi. 26, 27). S.



Paul clearly contemplates that some may communicate in one kind only, and he warns them that in any case they will be guilty of the Body and Blood of Christ; this proves that Christ is entire under each kind, for the guilt of an unworthy communion is incurred equally under one or both kinds. In the 27th verse a false translation has been deliberately adopted in the English Protestant Bible, which substitutes 'and' for 'or,' rendering it thus: 'Whoever shall eat this bread *and* drink the chalice.' Dean Stanley, who cannot be supposed to be influenced by any Catholic bias, makes on this point the following remark: 'Probably from the wish to accommodate the text to the change of custom, or from hostility to the Roman Catholic practice of administering the bread without the cup, the English translators have unwarrantably rendered  $\eta$ , 'and:'  $\kappa\alpha\iota$  for  $\eta$  occurs only in the Alexandrian, and in three cursive mss.' (1 Epistle to Cor. xi. 27, note, p. 211).

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## CHAPTER II.

### THE PRACTICE OF THE CHURCH.

WHILST the Church has invariably taught that all priests who celebrate the holy Eucharist are bound to consume it under both kinds, in order to complete the integrity of the sacrifice which they alone have the power to offer, she has never taught that there was any divine precept, either in the New Testament or in apostolic tradition, enjoining a similar obligation upon those who are only communicants, and not sacrificers. In this respect priests who communicate, without offer-

ing the Eucharistic sacrifice, are in the same position as the laity.

There is not a single authoritative word or act of which history gives any account by which it can be shown that either the Western or Eastern Churches considered the limitation of communion to one kind to be an infraction of the Gospel. On the contrary, there is abundant proof of the existence of such a limitation. The general custom of the Church for many centuries was, that when the faithful communicated in a public church and at the celebration of the Mass, they received in both kinds. Cardinal Bona states that this custom lasted until the beginning of the twelfth century.

But even to this there were early local exceptions. In the fifth century we find S. Leo the Great commanding that all the faithful should partake of the precious Blood as well as of the Body of Christ. If the practice was already universal, why was such a law required? The reason for the edict proves the prevailing liberty of choice upon this point. There are Manichean heretics, S. Leo says, who 'dare to be present at the divine mysteries in order that they may cover their unbelief, and who so manage themselves in the communion of the sacraments as to lie hidden the more securely; they receive with an unworthy mouth the Body of Christ, *but they altogether refuse to drink (haurire) the Blood of our Redemption*' (Serm. iv. De Quad.). He calls this 'a sacrilegious dissimulation,' and as a mode of detecting these heretics, who denounced wine as the creation of the devil, he made it a rigorous condition that all communicants should receive the 'Blood of our Redemption.' The liberty of not receiving it must, therefore, have previously existed, or the Manichees could never have carried out their stratagem. S. Leo died A.D. 461;

Pope Gelasius issued a similar decree about thirty years later; and since the Manichees rejected the chalice, not as being unnecessary but as impious, he declares that 'the division of one and the same mystery' (*i. e.* as practised by them with a profane intention) 'could not but proceed from an enormous sacrilege.' It would appear from the necessity of renewing Pope Leo's decree as if the former liberty which he had restrained had become prevalent again, and required to be again checked in order to expose those Manichees who were concealed in Rome. Sozomen relates that in the time of S. Chrysostom a woman, who was really a Macedonian heretic, but who desired to deceive her husband, pretended during the celebration of Mass to communicate. She had, however, arranged to pass the true Body of Christ to her maid-servant, who exchanged it secretly for something else that she had brought with her, and which she gave to her mistress; but, to the alarm of the latter, it became a piece of stone in her mouth. This event led to her conversion. There is no mention of her pretending to receive the chalice; in fact, there could have been no clandestine substitution of that, and the stratagem would have been impossible. It is evident that the woman followed a permissible custom in receiving only in one kind (Sozom. H. E. l. viii. c. v.).

It will be observed that the woman received the Eucharist in her hand. This mode of communicating appears to have prevailed also in the Latin Church until the change in the form of the Eucharistic bread. Originally ordinary fermented bread was used, and in round loaves, which were broken at the altar for distribution. The host was often called a 'crown,' on account of its form. Pope Zephyrinus, in the third century, speaks of it as a crown of a spherical figure:

‘Corona sive oblata\* sphericæ figuræ’ (Bened. XIV. De S. Miss. l. i. vi. 4). S. Gregory also makes mention of a priest who brought with him two ‘consecrated crowns’ (Dial. l. iv. c. lv.).

Later on, the host was made in the form of a coin, and was stamped with various impressions, such as the sign of the Cross and the name of Jesus. The practice of making the host like a coin was adopted at the end of the eleventh century. The thin wafer-bread, such as is now used in the Western Churches, came in, according to Cardinal Bona, together with the use of unleavened bread, whose date he fixes at some time between the period of the schismatical Patriarchs of Constantinople, Photius and Michael Cerularius; the latter of whom with insolent arrogance denounced this Roman practice in the pontificate of Leo IX., 1049-1054 (Lit. Rer. l. i. xxiii. c. x.).

The time of the introduction of unleavened bread is by no means certain, and varied no doubt in different countries. It must have been in use, more or less, in England as early as the eighth century, and therefore some time before the date assigned by Bona, for the Photian schism did not take place until past the middle of the ninth century. That unleavened bread was used in England is proved by a letter of Alcuin (Ep. clxxv.), who says that the bread for Mass must be pure, and ‘sine fermento’ (Lingard, loc. cit. note); and we know that Alcuin died in 804.

As to the mode of receiving the Eucharist in ancient times, it was the custom for men to take it into their

\* ‘The Latin term *oblata* was the origin of the Anglo-Saxon word *offlete*, which was afterwards corrupted into *obley*, the word used by our ancestors in the fifteenth and sixteenth century’ (Lingard, Ang.-Sax. Ch. vol. i. p. 292).

hands, which they had been careful previously to wash ; women were veiled, and received it upon a white cloth. The Council of Auxerre (A.D. 450) forbade women to receive with bare hands. S. Cyril prescribes that the hands are to be placed, one upon the other, in the figure of a cross (Cat. Myst. v. sec. 18).

When the chalice was given to the communicants it was put into their hands by the deacon. 'Wilt thou,' said S. Ambrose to the Emperor Theodosius, 'put the cup of *that Blood* to thy mouth, thou who hast shed so much blood by the hasty decree of an angry and impetuous mind ?' (Theodoret, l. v. c. xviii.)

The disuse of the chalice at the public communions of the faithful began gradually to be introduced into the Western Church at the beginning of the twelfth century ; various bishops in different places encouraging this limitation on account of the acts of irreverence that frequently occurred, and also to impress on the minds of the uneducated the undeniable entirety of the presence of Christ under each species. Some verses of a certain Rudolph, Abbot of S. Trudo, who flourished in 1110, have been preserved, in which he cautions priests 'not to give the Blood of Christ to laymen, either when sick or in health, for it might carelessly be spilt, and the simple might suppose that the whole of Jesus was not under each species' (Bona, Rer. Lit. l. ii. c. xviii.).

In the early part of the same century, Louis VI. of France, being ill, received the Communion in both kinds, which was conveyed to him directly after Mass, as is related by his biographer, Sugerus, Abbot of S. Denys. Spondanus mentions, in his chronicle of the year 1532, that the kings of France had the privilege at that time of receiving in both kinds on the day of their coronation.

and at the hour of death ; and that Clement VI. allowed them, on account of the great services rendered by the crown of France to the Apostolic See, to receive in both kinds whenever they wished ; but that they seldom used the dispensation except at their coronation and as a *viaticum* (Benedict XIV. De Sacrif. l. ii. c. xxii.).

At the close of the thirteenth century, the heresy of John Huss, denying the lawfulness of refusing the chalice to the laity, compelled the Church to act with decision, and in 1418 a positive law was enacted by the Council of Constance, forbidding the laity to communicate in both kinds. The decree says that the custom of restricting them to Communion under the species of bread only 'has been reasonably introduced, . . . since it is most firmly to be believed, and nowise to be doubted, that the entire Body and Blood of Christ are truly contained both under the species of bread and under the species of wine' (Sess. xiii.). Pius IV., influenced by the hope of in some degree stemming the tide of heresy that was increasing in Germany, gave permission to the bishops of that country to authorise their priests to give Communion in both kinds to the faithful ; this was in 1564 ; but the result was so unsatisfactory that the dispensation was revoked within a year by Pius V.

The Greeks have retained the ancient custom of giving Communion in both kinds to the laity at the public administration of the Sacrament in their churches ; but they have never held it to be more than a matter of discipline ; and in all their disputes with Rome, some of them being of a ridiculously trivial nature, they have never insisted upon this difference as a cause of complaint. They moreover give the Eucharist only under the form of bread during the whole of Lent, except on

Saturdays, Sundays, and the Feast of the Annunciation. The practice of making the sign of the Cross with the precious Blood over the bread when it is consecrated exists in some churches, but not in others; it was forbidden by Michael Cerularius, who became Patriarch of Constantinople in 1043, and does not prevail now in the Church of Constantinople.

These facts in connection with public communion would of themselves be decisive as to the belief of the Church, both in the East and West, as to the sufficiency for all requisite purposes, of communion in one kind. But the proof is indefinitely augmented by the following considerations :

The Blessed Sacrament was from the earliest times reserved in the churches, principally in order to communicate the sick; and yet, although the old books of ritual abound in minute directions as to the places and modes of keeping the Eucharist, and of disposing of it under prescribed circumstances, there is no single instance of any liturgical rules being given for reserving the Eucharist except in the form of bread.

That it was reserved sometimes in the form of wine is proved from a passage in a letter of S. Chrysostom to Pope Innocent I., in which he states that soldiers had been sent by the emperor to slay him, and that they entered the place where the holy things were kept: moreover, he says, 'We were witnesses that the Blood of Christ, as happens in such a tumult, was spilt upon the garments of the above-mentioned soldiers.' But the recorded instances of both kinds of reservation bear no comparison in frequency to the mention of the reservation of the Body of Christ alone.

We know that the Eucharist in the form of bread was placed in various receptacles, such as small turrets,

and gold and silver doves that were hung over the altar or in recesses at the side, called *pastophoria* (Rock's *Hierurgia*, vol. i. p. 281, 282, note); but there was no arrangement whatever for the Eucharist under the species of wine.

With regard to the Eucharistic turrets, it is an interesting fact that some have been dug out of the Roman catacombs; they are composed of red-coloured clay, and in more than one instance they have had small lamps attached to their sides, for the purpose of burning a light before the Blessed Sacrament.

The terrible outrages that sometimes were perpetrated by heretics or pagans prove the same point. S. Tharsicius, an acolyte, was carrying about his person the Eucharist, and was beaten to death with clubs and stones by some heathen persecutors in the fourth century. He is described in the Roman martyrology as bearing the 'Sacraments of the *Body of Christ*;' and in a poem ascribed to Pope Damasus, in 366, it is said that he 'preferred to be slain and to give up his life rather than to betray to raging dogs the *heavenly limbs*' (*cælestia membra*). We are informed also that, during a panic in the days of persecution at Thessalonica, the people were called to the church and told to carry away in baskets the particles of the Blessed Sacrament that were unconsumed. This occurred in the early part of the sixth century, under Pope Hormisdas.

There is an account in the Acts of S. Eudocia of her seeking an opportunity, before being carried off to prison, to go into the adjoining church, where, having opened the little ark, she took from it the holy Eucharist, concealing it in her bosom, that it might not be desecrated by the soldiers. Here, as in the former instance, there is not a hint of any chalice or vessel for reserving



the precious Blood. 'Brevi morâ impetratâ prodeundi accurrit in sacram ædem, reseratâque illic arculâ in quâ divinum donum reliquiarum sancti corporis Christi servabatur, inde particulam acceptam sinu recondidit; et sic statim cum militibus abiit' (Bolland. Act. Sanct. i. Martii).

The account goes on to relate, that on her being uncovered to the waist in order to be suspended from a pole, the sacred particle fell to the ground, and being taken up by her persecutor, the Prefect of Heliopolis, it burst into a flame, killing him with his guards, who were all afterwards raised to life again by the prayers of Eudocia. She was decapitated later on, some time in the reign of Trajan.

During the early period of the Church, when great difficulties arose in consequence of the scarcity of churches, and the pressure of external perils, it was a general custom to allow the faithful to have the Blessed Sacrament at their own homes, and even to communicate themselves. S. Basil speaks of this habit as prevailing through the whole of Egypt; Tertullian and S. Cyprian allude to it frequently as the case in Africa; and it existed to some extent even at Rome at the time of S. Jerome. Many hermits who lived far from churches had this privilege. The Eucharist was enclosed in pyxes or small boxes, and was suspended round the neck of the bearer, often accompanying him in his dangerous journeys, by sea as well as land. S. Satyrus, the brother of S. Ambrose, wrapped it in a linen cloth, and leaping into the sea, was miraculously preserved by it from death by shipwreck. He had not previously been advanced enough in the Christian mysteries to be admitted to communion of the Blessed Sacrament; but there were some of the faithful on board who bore about

their persons the Eucharist, and from these whom he knew to be among the 'initiated' he begged 'that divine sacrament of the faithful: not that he might pry with curious eyes into secrets, but that he might obtain a help to his faith' (Ambros. Orat. de Excessu Fratris).

Sacramental pyxes were made of various materials; some in gold have been found in the Roman catacombs; they were often of wood. S. Zeno of Verona, writing in the fourth century, supposes the possible case of a pagan husband, who, on discovering that his wife, who was a Christian, had one of these receptacles on her person, might strike her with it so violently as to 'bruise her breast, and disfigure her face.' It is worthy of note that S. Zeno calls the Eucharist enclosed in its box the 'Sacrifice.' Tertullian also, nearly two centuries earlier, uses the same expression. It appears that some Christians in his time had scrupled about receiving Communion before evening on fasting days, fearing that they by this means broke the fast; so he suggests to them that they might take the Eucharist home with them, and communicate when they were at liberty to take food. 'Having received and reserved the Body of the Lord, each obligation is safe,—the participation of the *sacrifice*, and the fulfilment of your duty,' *i.e.* of keeping the fast (De Orat. c. xiv.).

S. Cyprian, a century earlier, narrates that a Christian woman, after joining her heathen husband in an idolatrous act, on attempting to open her sacramental 'ark,' was terrified on seeing a sudden flash of fire burst from it.

S. Jerome severely blames those who, acting from a fear of incurring the divine vengeance under certain circumstances which he mentions, refuse to communicate in the churches, but nevertheless have no anxiety

about receiving the Eucharist at home. His language, whilst it testifies to the fact of this home-Communion, also clearly indicates the doctrinal basis upon which the lawfulness of Communion in one kind rests,—the indivisible presence of the whole Christ under each species. ‘Why do they not dare to go to the martyrs?—Why do they not go to the churches?—Is there *one Christ* at home and another in public? That which is unlawful in the church is unlawful at home’ (Ep. l. ad Pammach.).

They would have received the Eucharist in the church at the public celebration of Mass under both kinds; at their own homes they would have received it only under the form of bread, yet in either case they are described as receiving Christ; and S. Jerome’s argument is founded on the identity of the Christ Whom they would find in the church, and Him Whom they would receive in their private dwellings.

The habit of taking the Eucharist to private houses, originating as it did in necessity and piety, eventually led to great abuses; and consequently, by degrees it was forbidden. At a Council held at Saragossa, in 381, a decree was passed, to the effect that ‘if any one is proved not to have taken *in church* the grace of the Eucharist there received, let him be under anathema for ever.’ This law was directed against the reservation of it for consumption in private houses. The First Council of Toledo, in 400, denounced as sacrilegious whoever did not receive the Eucharist in church; and another similar law was made in the Eleventh Council in 675. This legislation was chiefly aimed at the Priscillianists; and therefore being of a local character, it did not prevail in all the other parts of the Church. The Priscillianists arose in Spain at the end of the

fourth century, and were a form of Manicheism; they denied the reality of Christ's Body, prohibited marriage, and disbelieved in the resurrection; they endeavoured to conceal themselves by going to the altar like the Catholics, but instead of communicating, they took the Eucharist away with them.

In some places, the Eucharist was occasionally taken home, to be there received, as late as the eighth century. But these seem to have been exceptional instances (Bona, l. ii. c. xvii. s. 4).

Although the Eucharist, when carried on journeys and sent to those who were very distant from any church, or too aged to assist at the Sacred Mysteries, was usually in the form of bread alone, there are recorded instances of its being conveyed under both kinds. Zosimus, a holy monk, is said to have taken the Body and Blood of Christ to S. Mary of Egypt in a chalice, she not having communicated for forty-seven years' (Bona, Rer. Lit. l. ii. c. xviii.); and S. Jerome, writing to Rusticus about S. Exuperius, Bishop of Toulouse, observes that 'nothing is more wealthy than he who carries the Body of the Lord in a wicker basket, and the Blood in glass' (ibid. c. xvii.).

The Eucharist was occasionally sent from the bishop of one diocese to that of another as a pledge of communion. S. Irenæus, in the second century, mentions it as having been forwarded from the predecessors of Pope Victor to the Church in Asia; and it is to be noted that there is no instance on record of the Eucharist having been sent for this purpose under any form but that of bread. It was even at one time usual for the Popes to send the Eucharist from the Lateran Palace, where it had been consecrated by themselves, to the titular churches within the boundaries of the city of

Rome, there to be given by the priests of those churches to the faithful, and also to be partaken of by themselves, as a pledge of communion between these churches and the reigning Pope. Innocent I., in the early part of the fifth century, mentions that on Sundays, when the priests cannot be with him on account of the 'people intrusted to their care,' he sends the Eucharist to them by acolytes, that they may not suppose, especially on that day, that they are separated from his communion (Ep. ad Decentium. c. v.). It was not allowed to be sent to parishes outside the city of Rome, 'because the sacraments are not to be carried to a long distance.' As there is no mention of the Eucharist being sent under the form of wine to the titular churches of Rome, Cardinal Bona concludes that the priests celebrated their own Mass at the churches, and gave the Papal Eucharist at the same time. From the difficulty of sending the Eucharist to distant places arose the subsequent practice of using blessed and not consecrated bread as a sign of ecclesiastical unity. Allusion is made to this by S. Augustine (Ep. xxxiv.); and the habit continued long, for Pope Formosus sent blessed bread to Charlemagne (Rer. Lit. l. i. c. xxiii. s. 9).

The Eucharist was sometimes even buried with the dead. S. Amphilochius, the reputed author of the life of S. Basil, narrates that he once, after receiving miraculously the materials for offering up the holy Sacrifice and consecrating them, consumed one portion of the Body of Christ, reserved another for his funeral, and deposited the third in a golden dove, which he suspended over the altar (Rer. Lit. l. ii. c. xvii. s. 6). According to S. Gregory, it was by S. Benedict's own order that the 'Communion of the Body of the Lord was laid on the breast' of one of his young monks, who

had died, 'and was thus interred with him' (Dial. l. iii. c. xxiv.).

There are traces of this usage amongst the Greeks up to the twelfth century. Not only was the Eucharist sometimes buried with the dead, but by a strange superstition, which was always strongly condemned by the Church, there are examples here and there of its being given to the departed as a *viaticum*, especially to those who, being at the time under ecclesiastical censure, had died before being publicly reconciled to the Church. The first instance occurred in Africa, and it was formally condemned by the Third Council of Carthage in 393; also by that of Auxerre, in France, in 578; and by that of Trullo, held in Constantinople in 692.

In all these various circumstances there is no allusion to the Eucharist, except under one form—that of bread.

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## CHAPTER III.

### THE COMMUNION OF THE SICK.

THE communion of the sick furnishes another class of evidence, all pointing in the same direction. The Eucharist was given to them constantly in one kind, and as a general rule, under the form of bread. Thus we read of Serapion in the third century sending for a priest when he was dying: he had sacrificed to the gods under the pressure of persecution, and now repented. The priest was too ill to go, but in such an extremity confided the Eucharist to the boy-messenger of Serapion, who, having moistened it, placed it in the

mouth of the aged man, who instantly expired. S. Ambrose was communicated in the same manner by S. Honoratus, Bishop of Vercelli. In cases where the sick could not from physical difficulty receive the Body of Christ, then they received the precious Blood alone. There was a decree on this point in the Eleventh Council of Toledo in 675.

A custom seems to have begun, at the close of the seventh century, in some portions of the Latin Church, of giving Communion to the sick with the species of bread dipped in the precious Blood, and it existed more or less for five centuries.

As there was some hazard of it being supposed that the Eucharist was incomplete unless given in this manner, Pope Paschal II., who reigned at the very beginning of the eleventh century, prohibited it from being given in this mode, preferring, as he declared, that the infirm who could not conveniently take the Eucharist in the species of bread, should receive it solely under the other species. He gave this order to Pontius, the Abbot of Cluny. But in some parts of France the old custom was still followed. It appears, too, that this habit was not always restricted to the sick; it was given in the same manner to the people; and an ancient ritual, whilst forbidding the priest and the sacred ministers to communicate in the manner that I have described, says, 'We allow this to the people, not by authority, but on account of the highest necessity, through fear lest the Blood of Christ should be spilled.' The practice was prevalent in England and strongly defended by Ernulfus, Bishop of Rochester; but it was forbidden by an English Council held in 1175, under Richard, Archbishop of Canterbury, in order to prevent the false impression that the dipped Eucharist was actually requi-

site for a complete Communion (Lit. Rer. l. ii. c. xviii. 3).

To revert, however, to the communion of the sick. It has been from the earliest times the custom of the Greeks to give the Communion to them with the Eucharist, in the form of bread, which had been originally moistened at the time of consecration with the precious Blood; but as this is done only once a year, on Maundy Thursday, the Communion has been always, and is now, practically under the form of bread only; it is placed in a spoon containing a little wine in order that it may be easily swallowed by the recipient. The same mode of administering to the sick prevails with the Maronites, Copts, Abyssinians, and other Orientals.

As the case of the sick and dying is one in which the charity of the Church would naturally take most especial care that nothing should be omitted, if possible, that could be useful to the souls of her members, and is required by the law of Christ, the ancient practice of communicating this class of the members of the Church, with scarcely any exception, is a fact that ought to have great moral weight in any controversy between Protestants and Catholics upon this point.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### THE COMMUNION OF YOUNG CHILDREN.

ANOTHER proof, if any more be required, of the belief of the Church in the sufficiency of Communion under one species is supplied by the ancient and long prevalent discipline, according to which the Eucharist was



given to children even in the earliest stage of infancy. There is a well-known instance mentioned by S. Cyprian, of a little girl who had been taken by her nurse to partake of bread mingled with wine, and offered to idols; she was afterwards brought to the Christian altar at which S. Cyprian himself was celebrating the holy Sacrifice; but when the deacon poured into her mouth 'out of the sacrament of the chalice,' she manifested her repugnance in so marked a manner that S. Cyprian, himself a witness, assigned it to a divine instinct (*De Lapsis*). The idea of communicating children arose from the desire to give them every possible privilege, after they had been made members of Christ's Body, the Church. 'By baptism,' says S. Cyprian, 'the Holy Ghost is received, and thus they who have been baptised and have obtained the Holy Spirit attain to drinking the chalice of the Lord' (*Ep. lxiii. ad Cecil.*). The words 'drinking of the chalice of the Lord' point to the custom of communicating those who were quite infants, with the Eucharist under the form of wine only. Jobius, an Oriental monk who flourished in the early part of the sixth century, says, 'First we are baptised, then we are anointed' (*i.e.* with the chrism of confirmation), 'and then we are deemed worthy of the precious Blood' (*Phot. Bibl.*). Jesse, Bishop of Amiens, in the eighth century calls communicating being 'confirmed': 'Let the bishop confirm the child with the chrism; and, last of all, let him be confirmed or communicated with the Body and Blood of Christ' (*Bingham, Antiq. Christ. b. xv. c. iv. s. 7*).

Radulphus Ardens, who wrote '*Sermones de Tempore et de Sanctis*,' about 1101, mentions that in his time it was still the rule to give newly-baptised infants the Eucharist, 'at least under the species of wine.'

It was the custom in some parts of the Church to give the remains of the holy Eucharist, before the species became corrupted, to carefully selected innocent children, who were brought to the sanctuary fasting. There was a decree of the Second Council of Mâcon in France, held in 588, ordering that the remains of the Eucharist when thus consumed should be sprinkled with wine; and the Third Council of Tours, in the reign of Charlemagne, enjoins the priest to exercise great discretion in fulfilling this office. This custom was forbidden in 1175 by Odo, Bishop of Paris, by a synodal decree, as also that of giving, as a substitute, unconsecrated hosts to children; and thus, according to Cardinal Bona, the practice ceased in the Gallican Church at the beginning of the twelfth century; but Nicephorous Callistus, who lived in the fourteenth century, speaks of its continuance in the city of Constantinople, and states that often, when he was a pious boy, he went to the church on his way to school, that he might receive, of course fasting, what he calls 'fragments of the pure and divine Body of the Lord our God, Jesus Christ' (Hist. Ecc. l. vi. c. xxv.).

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## CHAPTER V.

### CONCLUSION.

WHATEVER variety there may have been in the discipline which prevailed in different places and periods of the Church during the time when it existed, and whatever strong opinions private individuals may have held as to the importance—amounting, as some appear to have imagined, even to a necessity—of giving Com-

munion to children directly after baptism, or in peril of death, one fact ever is conspicuously prominent amidst this diversity. It was a point of no spiritual consequence to the infant whether it received the Eucharist in both kinds or in one ; and the preponderance of the latter mode of giving it over the former as a matter of fact and evidence, is too manifest to be reasonably denied.

The Church never contradicts herself, and we find her practical judgment clearly expressed in the following language of the Council of Trent : ‘ It must be confessed that Christ is received whole and entire and a true sacrament under either species only ; and therefore that as far as the fruit is concerned, they who receive one species alone are not defrauded of any grace necessary for salvation ’ (Sess. xxi. c. iii.). ‘ Finally, the same holy synod teaches that little children not yet possessing the use of reason are not obliged by any necessity to have the sacramental Communion of the Eucharist ; because having been regenerated by the laver of baptism, and incorporated into Christ, they cannot lose at that age the grace which they have already acquired of being the children of God. Antiquity, however, is not to be condemned, if, in some places, it sometimes observed that custom ; for as those holy Fathers had a probable reason for their conduct, considering the times in which they lived, so assuredly it is to be believed without controversy that they did not act in this way as if it were necessary to salvation ’ (ibid. c. iv.). The Council then proceeds to pass an anathema (1) upon those who affirm that ‘ all and each of the faithful of Christ ’ ought to receive communion in both species ‘ by the precept of God or the necessity of salvation ; ’ (2) on those who deny that the Church

was induced by 'just causes and reasons' to communicate laymen and clerics when not consecrating under the species of bread only; (3) on those who deny that 'Christ whole and entire, the Fountain and Author of all graces,' is received under the one species of bread; and (4) on those who affirm that 'the communion of the Eucharist is necessary for little children before they have arrived at years of discretion.'

It is not difficult to understand what are some, at least, of those 'just reasons which have influenced the Catholic Church in limiting the Communion to one kind, and that under the species of bread, throughout the largest part of her great spiritual empire; for the chalice is still allowed to the Greeks in communion with the See of Rome. The concurrent causes which have led gradually to a change into the more early discipline of the Church have been the extension of the number of the faithful; the difficulty of always procuring sufficient wine under widely varying circumstances of countries and people; the greater liability of this element, relatively to unleavened or leavened bread, to become in some climates corrupted; even the strong physical repugnance to it in certain cases of constitutional temperament; the peril of desecration and irreverence in the administration of the chalice, proved by a long and often painful experience; and last, but not least, the doctrinal importance—especially after the rise of the Hussite heresy, and the errors upon the Eucharist of the so-called Reformers\* in the sixteenth century—of

\* Luther, until 1533, held that communion in one kind was a thing indifferent: he said that Christ had nowhere commanded us to receive in both (*De Capt. Bab. cap. De Euch.*), and he angrily blamed Carlostadt for exaggerating its importance. Melancthon was of the same opinion, and a Protestant synod, held at Poitiers in 1560, decreed

preserving clearly in the minds of the people the faith of the indivisible presence of the glorified Christ whole and entire, under each and every part of the Eucharist, whether under both species, or under one separately from the other. The conduct of the Church has also its special value, as the authoritative assertion of a claim that can never be renounced—the supreme right to interpret the law of Christ, to alter discipline according to the exigency and fitness of times and circumstances, and preëminently to regulate the administration of sacraments, as well as to decide on controversies of the faith.

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that those who could not drink wine at the Lord's Supper should be allowed to communicate in bread.

## **DEFINITIONS OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH.**



## CHAPTER I.

### UNITY IN MULTIPLICITY.

#### § 1.

It was not always necessary to declare and define every truth contained in the record of the revelation of God. 'Many things,' wrote S. Augustine, 'were lying *hidden* in the Scriptures; and when heretics were cut off they disturbed the Church with their *crafty restlessness*: [then] those matters which had been hidden were laid open, and the will of God was understood' (In Psal. liv. n. 22). 'Many things, indeed, which belong to the Catholic faith, and are stirred up and down (*exagitantur*) by their crafty restlessness, are, in order that they may be defended against them, considered more diligently, understood more clearly, and preached more urgently, so that a question set in movement by the adversary becomes an opportunity of learning' (De Civ. Dei, lib. xvi. c. ii.).

Heretics strike with hostile hand at the doctrine of the Church, and the only result is that, contrary to their intention, a copious stream of truth flows forth from the smitten rock, to their confusion, and to the increased edification of the faithful.

When Protestants affirm that the promulgation of the twelve articles in the Creed of Pius IV., and of the two more recent dogmatic decrees about the Immaculate Conception and the Infallibility of the Sovereign Pontiff, are real changes in the faith of the



Catholic Church, they confound things which ought ever to be kept as distinct in the mind as they are distinct in reality.

The word 'change' is ambiguous, and in matters of religion especially its meaning ought to be strictly defined. By a change in the faith we may mean that the very *idea* itself of what was once believed to be revelation has been altered. To take an illustration from ordinary matters, I might at one time suppose that a certain object was inanimate and irrational matter; and at another time I might believe the *same object* to be animated and rational; *e.g.* I might mistake a piece of rock at a distance for a man. In this case my idea is fundamentally changed, and my belief is different; the language also expressing my idea will vary according to the variation of the conception in my mind. There will be a radical change both in my faith and in the description of my faith. But let us suppose that I have the same object before me at one time as at another—a star for example. If I look at this star when I am a child, I shall have the idea that it is a luminous point in the sky, distinct from myself or anything upon the earth: this will be about all the meaning that I shall attach to the word 'star.' In course of time I learn the science of astronomy; and what is the result? It is that this identical star, which I gazed upon in my childhood, remains precisely the *same object* that it was then, but it presents now to my understanding a greater number of ideas, all of them equally true, all consistent with each other, and all when focussed to a point combining to form a more full and accurate knowledge of what I had previously apprehended vaguely and imperfectly.

A change, therefore, has taken place in regard to

this star; but the change has not been in the star itself, it has been only in my mind; and the effect has been not to produce two *contradictory* ideas, one being that which I had before I knew astronomy, and the other that which I had afterwards, but an enlargement, a precision, and a clearness in my idea of the star which did not previously exist. If further I were to express my more scientific notion of this star in adequate phraseology, I should find myself necessarily *adding* to the form of language in which I had originally described the same object; for since my idea has expanded and become more exactly conformable to the reality outside my mind, so the verbal garb in which I have clothed my conception has proportionately increased in size and definiteness of form.

The above illustration will serve to explain the action of the Church in regard to the faith. There is 'one faith' only, and this faith has its divinely ordained limits which can never be passed. Now, when we speak of the *faith* of the Church we do not mean some particular form of words, which can never be increased or diminished, but we mean that one entire truth of revelation which God has committed to the Church to hold, guard, explain, and preach to the world, under the infallible guidance of the Holy Ghost. Since this revealed 'deposit' is one in the indivisible harmony of its parts, therefore the *idea* of it which is present always to what may be termed the mind of the Church, considered as one moral personality, must also be one: the Church cannot form in any successive period of her life an idea of the truth contradictory to what she has received from the beginning. The faith, moreover, is one, not merely by the consistency and organic compactness of its nature, but it is one *numerically*; there

is no other faith actual or possible; there can therefore be no additions strictly so called to this one faith: for to add something to what has been revealed once for all would be to introduce as part of the faith something *not* originally revealed; it would be to engraft a human invention upon a divine stem; and such an act would be a violation of the second kind of unity which distinguishes the faith, namely, the numerical. Any addition to the original faith must, in fact, either deny the *finality* of the Christian Dispensation, thus assuming that there may be successive revelations, distinct from that given by Jesus Christ to the Apostles; or it must 'adulterate the word of God' with the fictions of His creatures. The Catholic Church preserves, through her supernatural aid from God, both kinds of the unity of the faith. She makes no change in the faith by contradiction or addition. But although her own interior conception of revealed truth remains, like its object, ever one, she presents this idea to her members at successive periods under *aspects* which are at one time more extensive and precise than at another; she brings out her treasures more largely; she speaks more fully what she has always known; she pours out in the sight of the world more rays of that effulgence of doctrine which, to use the metaphor of S. Irenæus, she possesses as a sun. This is not an addition to, but a 'drawing out of, the faith;' it is not a progressive change *in the deposit and substance of the faith* itself, but it is a progressive change in the intellectual consciousness of the individual members of the Church who mentally *see* more of the truth than they did before; so that as the great schoolman said, 'The advance is rather that of the believer in the faith than of the faith in the believer' (Albertus Magnus, iii. dist. xxv. ar. i. ad 1).

New definitions, such as those of the Immaculate Conception and Infallibility, are not the teaching of truths unknown to the Church until the time of the definition, but they are the public, exact, and authoritative expressions of doctrines which had always been in the mind of the Church, although not always brought out and placed so distinctly before the minds of all her children. Fresh definitions are not a change in the *kind* of light which is thus made to radiate throughout the Church,—‘Thy word is a *light* to my feet,’—but they are so many fresh external inlets through which it enters: there is only one sun in the heavens, but in proportion as I add windows to my room the sun is enabled to communicate itself more abundantly. New definitions are, as it were, so many new verbal windows through which the faithful can receive the one light of the unchangeable faith. Their successive increase during the life of the Church on earth can be no proof of a substantial change in her faith, unless it can be shown that they convey an idea not only more ample than, but really *different* from, that original image of the truth which she possessed in the days of her infancy, when she had ‘one mind and one soul’ (Acts iv. 32). ‘Since the faith is one and the same, he who excels in the power of saying much will not make it greater, and he who is weak in speech will not make it less’ (Irenæus, Hær. lib. i. x. 2).

‘By disputations, persevering reading, meditation, and investigation of matters there is wont to be *increased* in course of time the *knowledge and understanding* of the same, and the Fathers of later Councils are assisted by the investigation and definitions of the former. Hence it arises that the definitions of later Councils are wont to be more luminous, fuller, more accurate and

exact than those of the earlier. Moreover it belongs to the later Councils to interpret and define more exactly and fully what in earlier Councils has been defined less clearly, fully, and exactly' (Molina, De Concord. Lib. Arbit. xiii. 15).

Suarez also writes as follows: 'The Church could be enlightened, after the time of the Apostles, in many things which might have become necessary (*i.e.* to be clearly apprehended) in times subsequent, and not previously; either because doubts had sprung up afresh, especially through uprising of heretics, or other rash men who gave false expositions of obscure matters, or even because it is the natural condition of man that he should advance in knowledge by degrees' (Defens. Fid. Cathol. lib. i. c. xviii. sec. 4). The progress of dogmatic knowledge is not the result of an accession of new objects of revelation, but of additional light developing itself upon old objects; and this light proceeds from the Holy Ghost, coöperating with, whilst it guides, the human elements of reasoning and investigation which are ever employed by the Church as she moves on her course.

Cardinal Toletus, in his commentary on S. John, where he treats of the promise that the Spirit of Truth shall teach the Apostles 'all truth' (xvi. 13), calls attention to the expressive Greek word for teach, *ὁδηγήσει ὑμᾶς εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν ἀλήθειαν*, 'He will be your Way-guide into all the truth.' This indicates a certain *movement and succession*; 'for He does not open out all things at once and immediately, but by a succession of time. Even the Apostles knew not all things on the day of Pentecost, for they inquired into many things afterwards which the Holy Ghost discloses to the Church according to the requirement of times and ne-

cessities of individuals. Certainly many things are now disclosed to the Church which were not beforehand distinct and open, a result occasioned by the errors of men. He therefore 'leads us into the truth.' He is our Guide and Ruler, and is ceaselessly present with the Church, and does not permit her to go wrong. Another idea implied is that as the Church is now a traveller and has to fight against foes, the Holy Ghost is to her like a military pioneer and director; but this control is not violent, since it acts efficaciously on the will without injuring its freedom, and therefore it is said 'He, the Spirit of Truth, will *lead* you' (Toletus, In Joan. xvi. Annot. xx.).

Such an advance may be called a movement, but it cannot be justly called a movement in contradiction to what has been held and taught by the Church in previous periods. To define in the nineteenth century something that was equally true in the second is not antagonism; there is just the kind of opposition that exists between a thing not defined and the *same* thing defined; and no more. When opponents attack the Church for declaring the Papal Infallibility, on the ground of contradiction with herself, they assume a falsehood; namely, that the Church has in some past age defined the Pope to be fallible, even in his official character as head of the Church.

## § 2.

There are very good personal reasons for the hostility which Protestants exhibit towards any increase in the articles of the Christian faith. It is not surprising, also, if they prefer Scripture to creeds, and the shortest possible summaries of belief, for summaries of some kind are necessary for the religious organisation of their

communities. The genuine Protestant has neither a clear nor a certain grasp of even the Christian verities which he holds in common with the Catholic Church ; he is timid in his efforts to realise their full meaning ; he feels himself rapidly drifting out of his depth in the process, for he has nothing but his own mind to guide him. Having no supernatural certainty, and proclaiming, as he does, the principle of private judgment, he is conscious that he must never put himself in such a position as to lose the right of exercising that liberty. He objects therefore, most naturally, to fixed and detailed formulas, both because these profess to exhibit truth with a certain exactness which presupposes a greater clearness of perception than he is conscious of possessing ; and because they hamper his future liberty of movement by pledging him, if he subscribed to them, to a particular opinion.

The heretical spirit is ever the same in its consequences because its root, self-will, is ever the same, although the form which it assumes may vary according to the circumstances of the time. In the present age, the opponents of Catholic doctrine prefer to avoid the construction of creeds, and in this respect they have deserted the example of the Reformers of the sixteenth century, simply because they have lost, even more than their predecessors, the idea of a Church, as distinct from a theological opinion or conviction. In the time of S. Hilary, the fourth century, one of his complaints against the heretics was their passion for making creeds ; this was the shape which their opposition to the Catholic Church took. But this difference between them and the present foes of the Catholic Church is merely nominal and accidental. For though the ancient heretics were fond of having many creeds, they could

not bear fixity of creed ; they liked novelty and inconsistent variety, not the steady legitimate development of one creed. Their belief was not the outgrowth of a uniform religious idea, but rather the fluctuation caused by the varying winds of opinion that came from influences external to the Church ; their creeds were mere mental billows, which no sooner took a shape in language than they disappeared, to be followed by fresh waves in rapid succession. The faith of heretics, said S. Hilary, in his second letter to the Emperor Constantius, is 'the faith of the times rather than of the Gospels ; there are as many faiths as there are wills ;' and he observes sarcastically, in allusion to the Arians and semi-Arians who were perpetually calling councils, that they made creeds about God by the month or the year, changed their determinations, then forbade what had been determined, and then anathematised their former prohibitions. Change and novelty were the mark and curse of the heretics in former days, and the same principle is in operation now ; for, if I may adopt a quaint old illustration, 'their faces are different, but their tails are all tied together.'

The ancient heretics liked formulas, but only on condition that they might change them often ; the modern adversaries of the true faith dislike formulas, but like variety ; so that their divergence from the old assailants of the Church is superficial and only in a matter of detail, whilst their agreement is real and based on a fundamental principle common to all who reject an authority external to themselves.

Every Protestant is essentially an inquirer rather than a believer, and a fixed formula is a kind of public signal that stability and finality have been attained—a signal really contradictory of his own principles. The



fewer, therefore, the articles of his creed are, the more the Protestant is at his ease, because the less is his mind tied down to anything definite; he roams comfortably through the obscure atmosphere of brevity. For the same reasons the Protestant prefers to shelter himself under the bare verbal text of Scripture. When the Catholic Church draws out the sense of Scripture, and embodies it in language that fixes that particular sense in the minds of her children more clearly than the mere words of Scripture alone, the Protestant accuses her of adding to Scripture. The reason of the objection is self-evident: the words of Scripture are frequently capable of various interpretations, and so long as no authoritative interpreter settles the signification they will retain that element of ambiguity, and therefore allow the range of choice in interpretation which is so genial to the Protestant mind. He is thus able to assume the appearance—for it is only an appearance—of outwardly honouring the Scripture by conforming his belief to its divine authority, whilst, in fact, he enjoys practically the liberty of not binding himself to any unchangeable determination as to the sense of the words. The words of Scripture do not change, but the Protestant *can*, and, as the history of Protestantism shows, *does*, alter the meaning according to his own changing belief; thus a dissolving view goes on developing its discordant scenes inside the old unchanged framework of the written Word, the Protestant reader of the Bible being, often most unconsciously, both machinist and spectator. The words of S. Augustine, describing the Manichean Faustus, are still applicable to each denier of the interpreting and defining authority of the Church: 'He subjects the Scriptures to himself, instead of himself to the Scriptures.'

It is an ominous warning for those who recognise Scripture alone as their rule of faith, that this principle was a characteristic feature in so many heretics. Pelagius, who endeavoured to destroy the essence of all religion by denying original sin and the necessity of grace to enable man to serve God, said, according to S. Augustine, 'Let us believe what we read, and let us believe it to be a crime to construct what we do not read' (De Nat. et Grat. c. xxxix.). Eutyches, who confounded the two natures in Christ, declared that if he found anything unsound or false in the decrees of the great Councils of Nicæa and Ephesus, he would 'search the Scripture alone, as being more solid than all the decrees of the Fathers' (1 act. Conc. Chalced. Harduin). S. Basil testified to a general *fact* when he said, 'The common object of all adversaries and foes of sound doctrine is to shake to pieces the solidity of faith in Christ by abolishing apostolic tradition and levelling it to the ground. . . . Therefore, as is the custom of those who are wanting in good faith, they demand with a clamour proofs from Scripture' (De Sp. Sanc. c. x.). S. Augustine asks how heresies have arisen, if not from this circumstance, because 'the Scriptures which are good are not well understood, and that which is badly understood is rashly and boldly asserted' (Tract. xviii. In Joan.). Heretics, writes Tertullian, 'put forward the Scriptures, and by this insolence of theirs they at once influence some. However, in the encounter itself they weary the strong, catch the weak, and dismiss the waverers with a doubt; our appeal, therefore, must not be made to the Scriptures, nor must controversy be admitted on points in which victory will be either impossible, or uncertain, or not certain enough' (*vide* Præscrip. c. xiv. xv. xix.). The Eclectics were fond of in-

terpreting Scripture independently of the Church, and prepared the way for the Arians, who in turn supported their heresy from the words of Scripture.

The history of the exegetical Syrian school of theology, which had the 'unhappy distinction' of 'fertility in heresy,' is 'summed up in the broad characteristic fact on the one hand, that it devoted itself to the literal and critical interpretation of Scripture; and on the other, that it gave rise first to the Arian, and then to the Nestorian heresy' (Newman's *Arians*, third edit. Appendix, p. 414).

To return, however, from this slight but not irrelevant digression about the connection between heresy and the appeal to Scripture, the principles and conduct of the Catholic Church in regard to the faith are diametrically opposed to those of Protestantism. She has a fully luminous and certain apprehension of the objects of her belief; she is therefore fearless in 'dividing the word of truth' according to the capacity of her children and the necessities of time and circumstance; and she is equally resolute in making laws upon doctrine, which shall direct and support by their guidance the understandings and will of all the faithful, because, being led by the Spirit of immutable truth, she is conscious that such decrees are exempt from the possibility of error, and therefore of retractation.

If the Church were only a human institution, if her mode of knowing divine truth were also only natural, and if Christianity itself were only a religious philosophy instead of being a message to man from God, the objections brought against her authority would be of weight. But 'the doctrine of faith has not been propounded to be perfected by human talent as a philosophical invention, but has been delivered as a divine deposit to the

Spouse of Christ, to be faithfully kept and infallibly declared. Hence, also, that meaning of the sacred dogma is to be retained which Holy Mother Church hath once declared, nor is that meaning ever to be departed from under the pretence or pretext of their deeper comprehension' (Vat. Conc. Constit. Dogmat. de Fide et Ratione, c. iv.).

### § 3.

The historical fact that the Church has at various periods of time increased the number of her articles of faith has frequently supplied to her enemies an accusation which they consider no less damaging to her charity than to her consistency.

If, they say, any doctrine is defined to be an article of faith, then to deny it, or even to doubt that it is a part of revelation, involves all such individuals in grave sin. The definition makes its acceptance a law binding the conscience of every Catholic throughout the world; it becomes therefore an essential test of union with the Church, and no priest can absolve or admit to the sacraments those who refuse to obey that law. Those Catholics, therefore, who happened to be born before the definition of the Immaculate Conception were compelled to submit to a new test and additional yoke after the 8th December 1854.

But this, they go on to argue, is not all; if it is a heresy now to deny the Immaculate Conception, then that must always have been a heresy, if what the Church alleges is true, namely, that she never decrees anything to be believed as of faith which is not contained in the original revelation of Scripture or tradition. In that case what a terrible consequence is the result! All

Catholics from the beginning of the Church who ever doubted of the doctrine were in mortal sin, and all who denied it were guilty of heresy! This difficulty, so imposing at first sight, springs like many others of a similar kind from a specific ignorance of Catholic theology and from a general confusion of mind.

If by 'yoke' an oppressive or unjust law is meant, then a new definition of the faith cannot possibly be so characterised; because all Catholics believe both in the supernatural infallibility and wisdom of the Church. There is no unfair exaction upon their intellect or will, for they know that 'she is the pillar and ground of truth;' if they preferred their own judgment to hers they would be Protestants, not Catholics; and it is clear that the command to yield 'obedience to the faith' (Rom. i. 5) could be irksome only to those who disbelieved in or distrusted the lawgiver by whom that assent is imposed. Nor can the novelty of the definition be a strain upon the understanding; on the contrary, as the definition is simply a clearer and fuller unfolding of what they have already believed in substance, the newness gives additional freshness and variety to the object apprehended and additional expansion to the intellect, which thus freely and calmly advances farther into the realm of revealed knowledge, being securely led by the Spouse of the Holy Ghost, whose very office it is to be the way-guide 'into all truth' (John xvi. 14). To illuminate the obscure; to precipitate into its natural and definite form what was before a doctrine, held as it were in solution by the minds of the faithful; and to set up unerring landmarks between faith and opinion, must be ever a gain to Catholics instead of a grievance.

In S. Bernard's time the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception had not been defined; the question was in

agitation, but not authoritatively solved. This illustrious saint, moreover, did not accept the dogma, at all events in the form under which it was presented to his mind. But he acted then precisely as all real Catholics will ever act for the future in analogous circumstances; he held his opinion with a reservation; and the language in which he expressed this reservation, more than seven hundred years ago, is interesting as a fact and valuable as illustrative of a principle: 'Let what I have remarked be said without prejudice to any one who may have sounder wisdom. I more especially refer this whole matter, as I do all others of the same kind, entirely to the authority and adjudication of the Roman Church; and am *prepared*, if my opinion is different from it, to conform myself to its judgment' (Ep. liv. ad Canonicos Lugdunenses).

As the children of the Church faithfully follow her steps wherever she leads them, and like S. Bernard are always *prepared* to conform their minds to her rule, they cannot be judged guilty, in the nineteenth century, of a crime which it was impossible for them to commit during the preceding ages. You cannot be said to have violated a law that did not exist whilst you were alive. The Immaculate Conception was always a revealed truth, and to deny it now is heresy; but although it was always a revealed truth, the denial of it was not always heresy.

It may be useful here to call the attention of those who are not familiar with Catholic theological terminology to the important distinction that exists between divine faith and Catholic faith; for through ignorance of this distinction the Church has been often falsely accused of a contradiction between her creed at one time and her creed at another. A doctrine is said to be of divine faith when it is really contained in the revelation

of God, written or unwritten ; it is divine because it is manifested by and depends upon the authority of God, and therefore it is to be believed with the undoubting assent of faith. But a doctrine may be really a part of the divine revelation, and yet may not have been distinctly promulgated to the whole body of the faithful, *as* revelation, by the unerring authority of the whole Church. When a revealed truth is so promulgated, it belongs from that moment to the Catholic faith. It is called Catholic because it forms an integral part of that one body of revealed truth which the Church has clearly and publicly taught to be such, and which therefore is, in the full technical sense of the word, the *Catholic* faith. It is Catholic because it is not only held as revealed, by the private belief of those individuals who may have accurately drawn it from the objective rule of faith, Scripture, and tradition, but because the Church has spoken on this point with the united voice of her teaching power, in the completeness of her entire moral personality, whether collectively together with her head upon earth, or by means of her head alone when acting *ex cathedrâ*. Lastly, it is Catholic because the obligation to believe in it as part of revelation extends to every unit of the whole body of the Church. Thus the terms 'divine faith' and 'Catholic faith,' as applicable to revealed doctrines, are not necessarily identical, although in popular language they are frequently interchanged as if they were. That which is of Catholic faith must always be some truth divinely revealed—it presupposes that fact ; but a truth may be revealed and yet not be invested, in relation to all the members of the Church, with that stamp of public, universal, ecclesiastical authority which places it officially in the rank of Catholic faith, and in that case it is said to belong to the class

of verities which are of divine faith only, in contrast with the other kind of faith.

To prevent a possible misconception as to what is included in the *proposition* of a dogma by the Catholic Church as a revealed truth, it may be useful to observe that, besides the verities expressly defined, those truths which are so manifestly declared in Scripture that there cannot be any reasonable doubt of the fact, are also considered to be proposed to our faith by the Church. 'Whatever is in so many words clearly and perspicuously read in Scripture by all who have understood the words, the same is commonly held by theologians to be proposed by the Church by virtue of the proposition of Scripture itself; that is to say, by the acknowledgment and declaration of the same Scripture as of a word divinely inspired. Amongst things of this kind, which are so evidently contained in the Scriptures that they cannot be called into question by anybody, are reckoned the nativity of the Word, His passion, death, resurrection, and things of a similar kind' (Schrader, *De Theologiâ Generatim*. p. 108, note).

When by the act of the Church any particular doctrine passes from the class of divine faith into that of Catholic, or, as it is sometimes called, divine Catholic faith, there is no inconsistency or contradiction of any sort; and yet there are controversialists who imagine that they have gained a signal victory if they can only prove that any Catholic writer has ever denied a particular doctrine to be an article of the *Catholic* faith at a given date, when he has admitted that it was, at the same date, an article of *divine* faith; as if the two ideas were necessarily identical in meaning and in the chronological order of their proposition to the faithful. It cannot be doubted that a truth may be really part of



the original revelation, and yet may be so indistinctly contained in Scripture and tradition that the faithful are not obliged to believe it to be certainly and divinely revealed until the Church has clearly proposed it to their faith *as revelation*. The time and mode of this teaching may vary, they are matters of detail; but the principle on which the obligation of Catholics rests never alters. The contradictory of a revealed dogma is not a heresy until its contradictory dogma has been manifested to be a revealed truth with *such a sufficiency of promulgation* by the Church as to bind all her members to believe it with divine faith. Where this kind of official manifestation of the faith is absent there is no law, and where there is no law of faith there can be no heresy; and where there is no heresy there can be no heretics. For what is a heretic but a man who pertinaciously denies some doctrine which the Church, either by her ordinary, practical, universal teaching or by some specific decree of Council or Pope, has declared, sufficiently for an obligation of conscience, to be an article of faith?

Unless, therefore, *ex post facto* laws made centuries after a man's death can affect him, it is impossible to charge heresy upon those Catholics who, in ages preceding this era, may have denied the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception or that of the Pontifical Infallibility. There is another consideration that ought to be remembered. It is a first principle with every Catholic, in all religious questions as yet undecided by the Church, to hold his own opinion absolutely *subject* to the judgment of the Church if ever and whenever it shall be made known to his consciousness. His will is pledged to the authority of the Church in all its Catholicity of time and place; and his intellect is ever prepared, so to

speak, like a photographic plate, to receive the projected image of truth whenever it is disclosed by their divine teacher. Thus *in intention* he always thinks according to the mind of the Church; and should he through no fault of his own hold at any given period, or even through his whole lifetime, opinions which will be eventually condemned by the Church, still the loyalty, the purity, and the integrity of his faith are all unimpeachable; for he has held his opinions accidentally and provisionally and *as opinions*, not as *the faith*; his adhesion to the Church has, although unconsciously to himself, virtually pronounced the same condemnation beforehand upon his own intellectual impressions as the Church will pass hereafter; and he has therefore implicitly accepted the opposite doctrine to that which in the days of his flesh lodged temporarily in his brain and was uttered by his lips. It is this grand substantial community of 'heart and soul' between the separate members of the Catholic Church and herself which makes them all equally one in the faith throughout every age, although the articles of the Catholic faith, growing as they have done successively in extent, have presented to the understandings of the individual members of the Church a body of revealed truths, varying at different epochs in kind, number, and explicitness of detail, yet identical in the substance of their meaning.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE NICENE CREED AND ITS FINALITY.

ANTI-CATHOLIC controversialists of different shades of opinion frequently contend that the Catholic Church has, by the introduction of new and additional articles of belief, violated an ancient decree of the Church, prohibiting the adoption of any other creed except the Nicene. The results of a fair and intelligent study of the question may be summed up as establishing the following conclusions: The Nicene Creed was regarded, both by the early Councils and most illustrious Fathers, as being entitled to the highest place amongst all the primitive expositions of the faith; as sufficient in itself, when truly understood, for the refutation of all heresies; as being perfect in the accuracy of its statement of the doctrine of the Trinity and Incarnation; as the immovable and sole foundation of the faith, against which the 'gates of hell should not prevail;' and as the grand exemplar upon which all authoritative teaching and tests of orthodoxy were to be based. It was to be ever preserved in its integrity, and not to be altered by addition or diminution, as if there were some flaw in its meaning or language; nor was any other creed to be imposed as a necessary term of communion with the Church, by any individual, whether cleric or layman, upon his own authority.

But although this is undoubtedly a correct statement of the question so far as it goes, it is not a *complete* account until we add the following conclusions, which are equally important with those above mentioned, both as theological truths and historical facts:

When the Nicene Creed was declared to be 'sufficient,' 'perfect,' and the 'sole foundation of the faith,'

the intention was to affirm that it was sufficient and perfect in the verities which it embodied, so that when duly apprehended, that is, 'by those at all events,' as Amphilochius said, 'who understood wisely' (*Epistola Synodica*), it contained in its principles and exposition enough to irresistibly confute heresy. The creed was called the 'one' (*unicum*) foundation, because any future explanation of the Catholic faith must start from, be built upon, and be exactly conformable to, this type; it is 'one' in the sense that no other contradictory or divergent faith can be allowed for a moment to displace it in the mind or symbols of the Church; and it is 'firm,' because it alone is the truth of God.

But the Church never intended, by passing a law such as that made by her at the Council of Sardica A.D. 347—forbidding 'any other creed to be put forth'—to debar herself for ever from promulgating, if she thought fit, any additional symbol which should be an amplification of that of Nicæa. This would be to abdicate the very rights which alone authorised her to issue the Nicene Creed itself. The chief purpose of any creed is to summarise the Christian revelation, and to present an authoritative doctrinal bulwark against errors in religion.

If, moreover, through the perversely fertile ingenuity of heretical minds, the real meaning of such a compendium is evaded or distorted, then, in order to secure more completely its integrity, it becomes necessary to frame more minute explanations, which can be applied for the threefold purpose of teaching the 'one faith' more fully to the already orthodox, of determining the doubtful or confused to a clearer and stronger adhesion to the truth, and of convicting the heterodox by a crucial test. As the scope and quality of heretical

attacks increase, the antagonistic action of the Church must also assume a correspondingly larger and more diversified form.

In illustration of this thought, it will be not inappropriate if I quote the exquisite words of Father Newman, who thirty-two years ago thus wrote about 'the great idea' of Christian revelation: 'Wonderful it is to see with what certainty of advance, with what precision in its march, and with what ultimate completeness it has been evolved, till the whole truth, self-balanced, on its centre hung, part answering to part, one, absolute, integral, indissoluble, while the world lasts! Wonderful to see how heresy has but thrown that idea into fresh forms, and drawn out from it farther developments with an exuberance which exceeded all questioning, and a harmony which baffled all criticism, like Him, its Divine Author, who, when put on trial by the Evil One, was but fortified by the assault, and is ever justified in His sayings, and overcomes when He is judged' (The Theory of Development, University Sermons, p. 316).

Again: 'Explanations grow under our hands in spite of our efforts at compression. Such, too, is the contrast between conversing and corresponding. We speak our meaning with little trouble; our voice, manner, and half words completing it for us; but in writing, when details must be drawn out, and misapprehensions anticipated, we seem never to be rid of the responsibility of our task. This being the case, it is surprising that the creeds are so short, not surprising that they need a comment' (p. 327).

Whether the modes of instruction and defence, new in order of time, but old in the substance of their matter, take the shape of confessions of faith, dogmatic decrees,

or other explicit terms of communion, they are never additions to the original creed of the Church, but strict explications of, corollaries from, and protections to it: they are simply a scientific ramification of theological outworks, which the faith of the Church, in moving forward against advancing errors, has instinctively raised and developed with a strategical adaptation to the varying necessities of the case.

The Nicene Creed is the principal supply-fount of all the subsequent streams of doctrinal exposition and confession; and therefore it should not be a matter of surprise if we find, as we undoubtedly do, that both Councils and Bishops, like an Athanasius or a Cyril, whose names have almost the weight of Councils, insist upon maintaining the Nicene Creed as the one foundation of the faith, sufficient and perfect, whilst at the same time they are issuing and enforcing, under the gravest obligation, formulas of a creed-character new in the fact of *explicit* publication, and more extensive *materially* than the symbol of Nicæa.

The following facts, about which there can be no dispute, will prove to demonstration the utter misconception into which Protestant controversialists have fallen in adopting the servilely narrow literal interpretation which they have imposed upon the canon, as if it prohibited any other profession of faith than that originally promulgated at the first Œcumenical Council.

The Council of Constantinople, which was held A.D. 381, and was the second Œcumenical Council, knew perfectly well about the existence of the canon in question, and yet had no hesitation in making certain additions to the Nicene Creed, which were recognised and confirmed by the fourth Œcumenical Council, A.D. 451. The principal addition consisted in the

words relating to the Holy Ghost, in which He is declared to be 'the Lord and Vivifier, Who proceeds from the Father, Who is adored and glorified with the Father and the Son, Who spake by the prophets.'

The third Œcumenical Council, held at Ephesus not only admitted the obligation of the prohibitory canon, but re-affirmed it in these words: 'It is not allowable for any person whatsoever to allege, write, or make a different creed from that which was made by the holy Fathers assembled at Nicæa; and all those who are so audacious as to make, allege, or offer any other to be signed by such as turn themselves to, or are converted by, the Church, whether they be Jews, pagans, or heretics, if they be bishops or clerics they shall be degraded from their dignity, and if they be laymen they shall be anathematised.'

The immediate occasion of this decree was the denunciation to the Council, by the priest Charisius, of an heretical profession of Theodorus of Mopsueste, which the Nestorian party had ordered to be signed by the Lydian converts from the heresy of the Quartodecimani. Not only was the doctrine set forth by Theodorus heretical, but it was an aggravation of the crime that it was cast in the shape of a creed, it being described as 'an exposition of impious dogmas reduced to the form of a creed.'

It is worthy of notice that the direct object of condemnation is 'a *different* creed from that of Nicæa,' although there is also an intention to prevent the substitution of any other, even orthodox, creed by any private individual, whether cleric or lay, as a condition of communion. The Council evidently did not profess to bind itself, or any future Council, or even bishop, acting with sufficient authority, never to develop

the meaning of the Nicene Creed more fully than is expressed by its bare words. Still less did the Council intend to forbid fresh formulas of faith condemnatory of fresh heresies to be 'made,' 'written,' 'offered,' and 'signed,' if such a necessity should arise for additional safeguards to the Nicene faith. The Council is its own best witness to this fact, for it not only accepted without protest the additions to the original Nicene Creed made by the preceding Council of Constantinople, but it condemned Nestorius, and published a declaration of faith about the Blessed Virgin as *Theotokos* or Mother of God, which was in a certain sense new, since it was not expressed in the Nicene symbol. S. Cyril also, who presided at the Council, sent a profession of faith to be signed by John of Antioch, containing other verities to be acknowledged besides those in the creed; whilst at the same time, and in the same profession, he made mention of the canon in question. The Council even accepted from Charisius, who denounced the formula of Theodorus, a statement of faith as Nicene, which differed slightly from the actual words of the Nicene symbol.

The Council of Chalcedon, the fourth Œcumenical, held A.D. 451, acted on precisely the same principles as those of Constantinople and Ephesus. It reaffirmed the canon, and the Fathers there assembled also explained that the Council of Ephesus did not by means of its language absolutely forbid any creed but that of Nicæa, but any *contrary* creed; and that there was no design of preventing the pastors of the Church from teaching the truth, but that the object was to stop heretics from corrupting it. Whilst the Council affirmed that the faith of Nicæa in respect to the doctrine of the Trinity was 'perfect,' it nevertheless justified the additions made by



the Council of Constantinople, on the ground that a new dispute rendered necessary a more explicit declaration about the Holy Ghost. This Council also, besides recognising the teaching of that of Ephesus in regard to the Nestorian heresy, which teaching was an amplification of that of Nicæa, made a further augmentation of explicit and definite faith by formally condemning the heresy of Eutyches. So far was the Council of Chalcedon from imagining that it was in any way violating the canon about the Nicene creed, or impugning its completeness, that the following was the language used: 'We do not wish to add to or diminish from the rule of faith established at Nicæa, confirmed at Constantinople, settled and laid down at Ephesus, and that which holy Leo follows, an apostolic man, and Pope of the universal Church' (Conc. Chalc. act. 2). The reason given for a new declaration of the faith, besides those of the three preceding Councils, was the fact of the introduction, by enemies of the truth, of new expressions signifying a denial of the doctrine of the *Theotokos*, and a confusion of the two natures in Christ; wherefore 'this holy and great Council, teaching that the faith is from the beginning always immovable, has ordained that the faith of the Fathers should remain firm, and that there is nothing to add to it as if it were in anything defective.' Thus, as Bossuet remarks, 'The definition of this Council has no novelty except a new declaration of the faith of the Fathers applied to new heresies' (*1er Avertissement sur les Lettres de Juriev*).

The fifth Œcumenical Council, or second of Constantinople, held A.D. 553, acted on precisely the same principles as the others that had preceded. It declared that it adhered to what it had received from the Holy Scriptures, the teaching of the holy Fathers, and the defini-

tions of the four holy Councils, but, in order to meet new evils, it condemned three heretical works, and concluded its fourteenth canon by a repetition of almost the same words as those of Ephesus, forbidding, under pain of deprivation and anathema, any one who should attempt to 'deliver, teach, or write things contrary to those decided upon' by the Councils.

The addition of the word *Filioque* to the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, declaring that the Holy Ghost proceeds *from the Son* as well as from the Father, is another obvious illustration of the practice of the Church in enlarging her dogmatic definitions according to her needs and her wisdom. The fact that this addition, originating in Spain in the fifth century, was opposed by Pope Leo III. in the ninth, and afterwards, for equally valid reasons, allowed by Benedict VIII. in the eleventh century, does not involve any contradiction of theological principle. The doctrine of the Double Procession was strongly asserted by Leo at the very time of his refusal to permit its insertion in the creed; he had full power to insert it, but he declined to exercise his right. If another Pope afterwards consented, it was because he judged the change to be warranted by the altered circumstances of the case. The creed, with the addition, was formally recognised at the second Council of Lyons, A.D. 1274, and at that of Florence in 1441.

Nor must it be supposed that Œcumenical or particular Councils alone claimed and exercised the right of requiring subscription to detailed developments of the Nicene Creed. History shows that individual bishops also acted in the same manner, and upon the same grounds. It was the intense reverence for, and sublimely enthusiastic faith in, that symbol which generated

these dogmatic tests, and not the spirit of novelty or depreciation ; it was the rich and ever vigorous sap of that trunk which evolved so many branches. Among the list of those great men who, whilst sacredly tenacious of that prohibitory canon to which allusion has been so often made, were equally firm in insisting, when necessary, upon adhesion to a fuller and more minute exposition of their faith than that of the Nicene Creed, we find the names of Athanasius, Hilary, Damasus, Basil, Cyril, Gregory of Nyssa, Epiphanius, Eusebius of Vercelli, Amphilochius, and others. Athanasius quotes the canon in a synodal letter to the Antiochenes ; and, ' nevertheless, attached to that document we have a new profession which Athanasius had written with his own hand, and which Paulinus (Bishop of Antioch) was obliged to sign, that he might clear himself from the suspicion of heresy. S. Hilary affirms the sufficiency of the Nicene faith, and yet he wrote a profession which he insisted should be signed by Auxentius as a condition for communion. Damasus introduces the canon into his dogmatic letter to Paulinus ; Basil, into the profession he wrote out for Eustathius ; Cyril reproduces it in the profession he sent to John of Antioch. Gregory of Nyssa, Epiphanius, and Eusebius of Vercelli, who could not be ignorant of what was meant by the canon, wrote elaborate expositions of faith ; and we know that by immemorial tradition Popes and Bishops were bound to present a profession of their orthodoxy on the assumption of their sacred offices' (Athan. Creed, by Rev. J. Jones, S.J., 'Month,' Oct. 1874, p. 205).

The above considerations will be more than sufficient to vindicate the Catholic Church, both from the general accusation so frequently brought against her of changing her creed by unlawful additions to the 'faith once

delivered to the saints,' and from the particular charge of having violated the ancient canon forbidding any other profession of faith except that of Nicæa. Heresy, inconsistent as it is by the necessity of its nature, will ever try to avenge its disease and punishment by attributing the same fatality to the Church against whose unity of faith it is ever hopelessly waging war.

But what the Church has ever been, such will she continue to be until the end of the world; she will move, because she is full of the life of 'grace and truth;' but she cannot contradict herself, because 'unity is her excellence and the principle of her construction' (Clemens Alex. Strom. vii. 17). To adopt the words of a late Dogmatic Decree, 'The Church of Christ, who is the sedulous guardian and vindicator of the truths intrusted to her keeping, never changes anything in them, nor takes anything away from them, nor adds anything. Her endeavour is so to elaborate with completeness and precision the ancient dogmas of celestial teaching that they may acquire clearness, light, and distinctiveness, but retain their fulness, entirety, and speciality, whilst they develop only within their own proper nature, namely in the same doctrine, the same sense, and the same judgment' (Bull of Pius IX. on the Immac. Conception).

That which is a cardinal principle of the universal Church is also an unalterable law of the especial organ of her unity, the See of Peter—a law which pontifical infallibility does not dispense with, but obeys and confirms; for 'the Holy Spirit was promised to the successors of Peter, that by His assistance they might inviolably keep and faithfully expound the revelation or deposit of faith delivered through the Apostles' (Vat. Conc. sess. iv. c. iv.).



**EXISTENCE OF THE CHURCH IN RELATION  
TO SCRIPTURE.**



## § 1.

It has been argued that a Catholic who believes in the genuineness, canon, and inspiration of Scripture upon the authority of the Catholic Church, which he is convinced is infallible, rests his faith quite as much upon mere human evidence as a Protestant who denies the existence of such a Church. The reasoning is as follows: The Church's own testimony to herself must not be accepted, because this would be to prejudge the whole question; she must be put out of court, and the examination must proceed upon evidence external to her. A Catholic may try to prove the existence and nature of his Church from Scripture, such as the text in S. Matthew, 'Thou art Peter,' &c. (xvi. 18), or from the Fathers, or both; and he may also undertake to establish the fact of S. Peter's episcopacy at Rome, and the link between the Roman Church of the present day with S. Peter, by succession. But as the testimony of the Church must be put aside in this argument, and the Catholic has no other infallible witness to appeal to, he is no better off, so far as infallibility is concerned, than the Protestant. For if we grant that he proves all the points above mentioned from Scripture, the Fathers, and history, nevertheless his whole basis rests upon human evidence alone, just as does that of the Protestant in regard to *his* faith in the genuineness, canon, and inspiration of Scripture. The Catholic would not advance above human certainty, even if he could prove from S. Matthew that the Church of Rome is infallible,



and then, having proved this point, were to argue that he is, on account of that fact, infallibly certain of the genuineness, &c. of Scripture. This, it is said, is a mere illusory fallacy—it is a vicious circle; for the Catholic's proof cannot rise higher than its origin, and since he is obliged to start with human evidence about S. Matthew's Gospel, he can never get beyond that kind of evidence, because the supposed infallibility of his Church rests on that kind of proof as its original foundation, for S. Matthew's Gospel itself, which is his guarantee for the infallibility of his Church, is provable solely by human evidence.

The argument is frequently adopted in Protestant controversy, and bears upon it strong marks of plausibility. But it labours under more than one fault. It confounds two things which are quite distinct—the motives of credibility which lead to the belief in the existence of an authority, and the nature of the authority itself. By this confusion a kind of logical legerdemain is produced, the effect of which is to invest the object whose existence is proved, with the same quality of obligation on the mind's assent as that which is imposed on the mind by the *reasons which have led to the proof* of the object, neither more nor less. According to this mode of arguing it will follow, as a logical consequence, that although I can show by certain yet only human evidence that God has made to me a revelation of His will, nevertheless the obligation for me to believe what God has declared is not a divine obligation, but only human, because the *fact* of the revelation having been made rests upon human evidence only.

I have made these remarks in order to prepare for the solution of the question which is represented as a vicious circle of reasoning. For the sake of the argu-

ment let us for the moment put the testimony of the Catholic Church to her own self aside, and imagine the case of persons who are led by Scripture to believe in the Catholic Church. Although their belief in Scripture previously to their accepting the authority of the Catholic Church arises from a conviction that rests only on human evidence, still, after accepting the Church, they can believe the same Scripture with a certainty that is divine, and not merely human. There is no fallacy in this any more than in the case of those Jews who never saw Christ work a miracle, and yet who believed, on sufficient grounds, that He was the Messias. When they once believed Him to be divine, then *whatever* He said to them was henceforth believed by them with a divine and not a human certainty. The wooden ladder, so to say, enabled them to step on to the rock; for the fact of Christ being divine gave such a character to His sayings, that they claimed and obtained from these disciples a conviction which was a divine certainty. If, for instance, He had told any one a fact which they *knew before*, but *knew* only on human evidence, they would believe that *fact henceforth on divine authority*, and with a divine certainty. Apply the argument to the Catholic Church. A person believes from Scripture alone, or Scripture and the Fathers, that the Church of Christ has a divine authority by virtue of Christ's own commission; then, *if it is a fact* that the Church *is* divine, her statement that such and such a text is Scripture, and has a particular meaning, endows that text with a divine authentication which produces a divine certainty, and they who believed the facts about that text formerly on human evidence *only*, now, after accepting the authority of the Church, hold them with a divine certainty. No doubt all depends on the question whether the Church is

divine, and so it does with regard to Christ; but all I am concerned to show is, that in arguing from Scripture to the Church, and the Church to Scripture, there is not *necessarily* any logically vicious circle.

Numbers believed in the truth of the teaching of the Apostles, with a more than human certainty, who had nothing higher to begin with than human evidence that they were what they professed themselves to be, ambassadors for Christ; yet the infallible testimony of the inspired Apostles as to what Christ had revealed produced in the minds of their disciples a higher kind of assent than did the mere data upon which they determined to believe their testimony, whenever they gave it—no matter what their declaration might be.

If it be said that miracles accompanied the ministration of the Apostles, and that this proved, by a fact which was beyond human power, that the Apostles had a mission from God, still that does not solve the difficulty, because those who did not witness the miracle personally must have depended on the evidence of their fellow-men; and even those who did witness them personally could only *infer*, by a process of reasoning, the possession of divine power by the Apostles, and they must also depend for the truth of that inference on the veracity of their own human senses.

There is this wide difference, moreover, between the relation of the Protestant's mind to Scripture and that of the Catholic to his Church: a Protestant never can, *upon his own hypothesis*, advance beyond the fallibility of his own judgment; for as he refers the evidence of the genuineness, canon, inspiration, and interpretation of Scripture to his own opinion as the final court of appeal, then, even if he be himself satisfied on all these points, he is obliged to admit that he *may* be wrong and

may have to change his judgment. There can be no complete finality in his faith, for he is confessedly liable to error. He must allow that amongst his co-religionists there are grave dissensions of opinion, and especially amongst those who are most capable of critical and scientific investigations, as to the real nature and meaning of Scripture. And if the more educated Protestants are at issue on such important points, what is the mental attitude of the masses? For these, rejecting an infallible Church, and having, of necessity, nothing by which to regulate their judgment but the utterances of hesitating and discordant leaders, are even in a worse plight as regards certainty and clearness of faith, because they are more helpless to obtain anything like a fixed intellectual basis for the repose of their own minds; they can but anxiously watch and try to follow the ever-changing waves of theological speculation, or else remain indifferent to, and blindly reckless about, the truth. Whereas a Catholic, whether learned or unlearned, has, upon his principles, an infallible guide in those matters about which the Protestant must be, on anti-Catholic principles, liable to mistake.

## § 2.

I have so far waived the testimony of the Church to herself and her prerogatives, because that appeal was not necessary in order to show the fallacy of the alleged vicious circle. But I cannot admit the equity of the assertion, that to prove the claims of the Church we must not admit her as a witness at all in the matter under dispute, but must decide the whole question of her existence and character upon evidence solely extrinsic to herself.

If the Catholic Church called upon men to admit

her claims, upon her bare assertion alone, without giving them any more reasons than the mere fact that she asserts that she is what she professes to be; or if, as in criminal cases, according to the English law, she stood in the position of one against whom there was sufficient *primâ facie* suspicion to place her on trial before lawful judges superior to herself, and also was not to be allowed to speak for herself, no matter what charges were brought against her, there would be some force in the conditions for the controversy thus laid down. But there is no parallel whatever between the cases. The Catholic Church is not a mere mechanical mouthpiece which utters an assertion—a *vox et præterea nihil*—and which accompanies this assertion with no surrounding marks to recommend its credibility to the minds of men. The Catholic Church has not suddenly sprung out of the earth in the nineteenth century. Viewed simply from a historical standpoint she has a right to be heard as a witness in her own case; she has her constitution, her laws, and her traditions, tracing back their origin to the apostolic age. The Church has been so conspicuous an organisation in the world for eighteen hundred years, that it is even more an absurdity than an injustice to profess to examine history, the Fathers, or Scripture *about* her claims, whilst refusing to look at or listen to one word from her own self.

If no witnesses are ever to be heard because there is a controversy as to some subject connected with themselves, the Apostles and their immediate successors would have had no right to ask the world to believe in Christianity, because their own testimony, together with its marks of credibility, formed a part of the evidence for Christianity. This mode of arguing would treat the Catholic Church as if she were either a

mute anonymous document, unable to testify to her origin and identity by the very nature of the case, or else utterly unworthy to be believed, no matter what accumulation of evidence with regard to herself she might be able to adduce; the latter being a supposition that must be proved before it can be acted upon with any shadow of fairness.

S. Augustine has the following striking remarks upon the Church: he is contrasting the faith of the disciples who saw our Lord and heard Him declare that 'penance and remission of sins should be preached in His name unto all nations' (Luke xxiv. 47), with the faith of those who had never seen Christ. The disciples, he observes, did not see the fulfilment of Christ's words, but they beheld Him making the prediction. 'They saw the Head; they did not as yet see the body. We see the body, and believe concerning the Head. . . . He showed Himself to the Apostles and promised the Church. He has shown the Church to us and commanded us to believe about Himself. The Apostles saw one thing and did not see the other. We, too, see one thing and not the other. As they, on account of the Head, Who was present, believed in the body, so let us on account of the body, which is present, believe concerning the Head. Are we about to deny? But truth itself, crying out, will not permit us to deny. For we see the Church of Christ, from the rising to the setting of the sun, praising the Lord' (Serm. lxxxvi. In Pasch. apud Mai, N. PP. Bib. t. i. p. 167).

It is an error common amongst Protestant controversialists to suppose that the Catholic Church professes to derive her authority from Scripture, because, when arguing with those persons outside of her pale who admit the Scriptures to be divine revelation, she

appeals to certain passages in it in confirmation of her claims. These reasoners then argue, that as the Church can have no more assurance about the existence or meaning of Scripture than Protestants, namely, that of merely human opinion, therefore all the alleged authority of the Church rests upon a fallible basis.

This argument, however, assumes that the Protestant mode of accounting for the existence of any Christian Church is true of the Catholic Church, namely, that it owes its origin to the letter of Scripture. Protestants form themselves into religious associations on the basis of their interpretation of the Bible; the dead document, as explained by themselves, is the cradle of the nativity of all those Protestant sects which are called by themselves Churches of Christ.

This is a true statement about Protestant religious communities, but utterly the reverse in regard to the Catholic Church. 'The Apostles founded Churches in every city, from which all the other Churches, one after the other, derived the tradition (literally "the vine-layer," *traducem*) of the faith, and the seeds of doctrine, in order that *they may become Churches*. Indeed, it is only on this account that they will be able to deem themselves apostolic Churches, as being the offspring of apostolic Churches. Every sort of thing must necessarily revert to its original for its classification. Therefore the Churches, although they are so many and great, yet comprise but the one primitive Church, [founded] by the Apostles, from which they spring' (Tertullian, *Præscrip.* c. xx.). And he adds that the Apostles communicated to the apostolic Churches 'that which Christ had revealed,' by preaching it to them 'both by word of mouth and *afterwards* by their letters' (c. xxi.). The Catholic Church, which is the multi-

plied concrete unity of the apostolic Churches, living on, from age to age, by a derived fellowship with them in faith and government, does not therefore owe its actuality to the pages of a written revelation.

This Church is an organic living body which began its action upon the earth before the New Testament was composed. As she had commenced her existence before a syllable of the Gospels or Epistles was written, how can she depend originally upon that which came after her in time? The history of the apostolic Church is easily traceable in the early ecclesiastical records, and there is not the hint of an idea that it was framed after the composition, or as a result of any study, of the written Word. Christ Himself, in His own person, formed the Christian Church out of the apostolic body, S. Peter being appointed by Him as the visible head and uniting centre of the whole body; and the subsequent growth of the Church was only a continuation and expansion of the same identical corporation. The unity of the organisation was preserved by the order of episcopal succession, by means of which, and preëminently by means of the succession in the See of Peter—the culminating apex of the whole structure, to which all other lines of succession converged—the unity of doctrine, of sacramental administration, and disciplinary government was inviolably and constantly maintained, as it is to the present day. Those who, like Timothy and Titus, and all the other pastors, were appointed to ‘feed the flock of God’ (1 Pet. v. 1-4), ‘to rule the Church of God,’ purchased by the Blood of Christ (Acts xx. 28), no more depended, for the authority or evidence of their divine mission, upon any written document than did the Apostles themselves, whom S. Chrysostom describes going about everywhere as



'*living books* and codes of laws' (Hom. in Matth. l. n. 1). The origin and progressive continuation of the infant Church are thus expressed by a disciple of the Apostles and a successor of S. Peter: 'Christ was sent by God, and the Apostles by Christ. . . These, preaching the Word through regions and cities, constituted the first-fruits, when they had been proved by the Spirit, as bishops and deacons of those who should hereafter believe. . . . They ordained them, in order that, after they themselves should have departed from life, other approved men might take up their ministry' (Clemens Rom., Ep. ad Cor. n. 42-44).\*

It was through the channel of this succession that the one truth was handed down from age to age; that the divine right to claim obedience from the faithful continued in full force; and that the Holy Spirit abided with His presence and supernatural operation. Hence Polycarp declared, that 'as Christ was the manifested thought of the Father, so the bishops were the manifested thought of Jesus Christ, and were to be regarded as if they were our Lord Himself' (Ep. ad Ephes. n. 3, 6). S. Irenæus, too, says that those who have succeeded to the Apostles have, '*together with the succession of the episcopate*, received the certain supernatural gift (*charisma*) of the truth' (Hær. iv. c. xxvi. n. 2), 'through the working of the Spirit' (ibid. c. xxiv. n. 1).

From the above brief sketch of the origin of the Catholic Church—that Church which S. Augustine strikingly describes as 'the unbroken heritage of Christ' (De Bapt. l. iii. c. ii.), it will be evident that she would never, in claiming the obedience of faith from those outside her pale, rest the assertion of her rights

\* See 'Tradition as a Vehicle of Christian Doctrine,' p. 203.

upon any text or number of texts in Scripture, as the *fundamental* grounds of her claim. When catechumens came to her from Jew or Gentile, they asked not for the Scriptures, but for faith: they were not even allowed to read the Scriptures until they had fully accepted the creed and teaching of the Church.

They did not go to Scripture in order to test the assertions of the Church, but they went to the Church in order to obtain certainty about the Scriptures. 'There,' says S. Irenæus, 'it behoves us to learn the truth among whom is that succession of the Church which is from the Apostles; these are they who *guard the faith, and expound the Scriptures* without danger' (Hær. l. iv. c. xxvi. n. 5). S. Clement of Alexandria says that 'all things are right with those who understand, that is, who, receiving the exposition of Scripture declared by the Lord, *according to the ecclesiastical rule* (i.e. the doctrine of the Church), 'keep it' (Strom. vi.). Tertullian ridicules bitterly persons who appeal to the Scriptures, and 'whom *we prove without the Scriptures* that they have nothing to do with the Scriptures' (Præscr. c. xxxvii.). 'The truth remains in the womb of the Church' (Augustin. Enarr. in Psal. lvii. 4). 'I would not have believed the Gospel if I had not been moved to it by the authority of the Catholic Church' (Cont. Epist. Fund.). 'Those who are out of the Church cannot have any understanding of the Scriptures' (Hilar. in Matth. xiii. 1).

As the Catholic Church of the apostolic times was, as to her origin and rights, independent of the Scriptures—for otherwise she could not have been a guarantee for their genuineness, or a certain interpreter of their meaning—the Church of the present day occupies the same position precisely because she is the same con-

tinuous heir of the Apostles ; if she took up the Protestant ground for her authority, and based it solely on the *letter* of Scripture, she would by that act disprove *ipso facto* her identity with the Apostolic Church.

The New Testament is that part of the divine tradition which was written after the Church was already formed ; which belongs to her as the original recipient, for no portion of it was addressed to non-members of the Apostolic Church ; and which she guards as a most precious deposit, and as a confirmatory testimony to herself and her teaching ; and this, together with that other part of tradition called unwritten, in contradistinction to the canon of the New Testament, but equally divine with the written, forms the *objective* matter and rule of the faith.

But although the Church uses the New Testament as an irrefragable argument in support of her claims when appealing to those who admit its genuineness and veracity, if not its inspiration, and attributes great moral weight to it as an extrinsic and concurrent testimony, yet it must not be forgotten that she is, historically, anterior to the New Testament ; not anterior to *all* the truths and facts which it records, because many of these preceded, in point of time, the actual formation of the Church, but anterior to their expression and providential preservation through the medium of a written document.

‘Supposing,’ says S. Irenæus, ‘that the Apostles had left us nothing in writing, should we not still follow the rule of doctrine which they delivered to those to whom they intrusted the Churches?’ And he gives the reason : ‘Into her (the Church), as into a rich treasury, the Apostles poured in full stream *all* which appertains to the truth, so that all who will, may drink at

her hands the water of life' (Hær. l. iii. iv. 1). If the Scriptures edify the soul it is when they are read inside the fold, and under the guidance of that same Church which can go on converting barbarous nations without the Scriptures. 'We must fly to the Church, and be *fed at the breast*, and be nourished by the Scriptures of the Lord.' The juxtaposition of these two processes indicates their mutual connection, as if nutrition by the Scriptures depended on first receiving the maternal food of the Church.

Nor was the succession, which carried on the constitution and attributes of the Church, a mere multiplication of bishops by numerical acts of consecration, without reference to the original conditions by which the episcopate was constituted in unity by Christ, as the sole representative organ of His doctrine and pastoral rule. A succession which did not convey to those who were ordained the true faith and lawful jurisdiction, would propagate not truth but error; not unity, but schism; not jurisdiction to be obeyed by the faithful as that of Christ, but rebellion and usurpation to be resisted as a sacred duty.

The succession, therefore, was such as really imparted the unity of the Catholic episcopate; and as this unity was derived from, centred in, and was inseparable from, the successor of Peter, the whole existence, identity, and continuation of the Church of Christ depend necessarily on recognised fellowship in doctrine and obedience of discipline with the See of Rome; so that 'where Peter is, there is the Church,' according to S. Ambrose (in Ps. xl.); and 'where the Church is, there is the Spirit of God; and where the Spirit of God is, there is all grace;' 'now the Spirit is Truth' (Irenæus, Hær. iii. 24, n. 1).

The essential connection that ever exists between the true faith, and that true apostolic succession by which the life and perpetuation of the universal Church are preserved and carried on, is thus expressed by the same writer in a well-known passage. After confounding the heretics with 'the tradition manifested by the Apostles in the whole world,' he deems it a conclusive victory over them to quote, as the 'faith handed down even to us, by the successions of bishops,' that which was professed at Rome and came through *that* succession of bishops: '*for with this Church, because of its more powerful headship, every Church must agree; that is, the faithful everywhere; in which the tradition of the Apostles has always been preserved by those on every side*' (Hær. iii. c. iii.). Union in doctrine with the Church of Rome, therefore, is the necessary condition for the preservation of the apostolic faith in the entire Church. Nor is mere agreement with Rome in doctrine the sole requisite for membership with the Church of Christ; there must be union with its government by obedience to its supremacy; for this subordination is a condition of membership with the universal Church. Individual Churches can only be integral parts of the one Church by obeying that law of unity which Christ Himself established when He founded His Church on Peter. Hence, according to S. Cyprian, not only is the Roman 'the principal Church from which the unity of the priesthood took its rise' (Epist. iv.), but 'unity is *preserved* in the source itself.' 'There is one God, and one Christ, and one Church, and one chair founded on the rock by the voice of the Lord' (Ep. xl.). It is as true that there *is* one Church as there is one God and one Christ; and it is equally true that this one Church owes its unity, and therefore owes its existence, such as

it came from Christ, to the chair of Peter. S. Augustine, writing to the Donatists who refused to obey Rome, although their faith was the same, and in the year 394 their validly consecrated bishops were so numerous that 310 assembled at a council, thus addressed them : ‘ You know what the Catholic Church is, and what it is to be cut off from the vine? Come, if you desire to be engrafted on the vine. It is a pain to see you thus lopped off from the tree. Number the bishops from the very See of Peter, and observe the *succession of every father in that order : it is the rock against which the proud gates of hell prevail not*’ (Ps. cont. Part. Don.).

As the Catholic Church is anterior to the New Testament, so she is anterior to the Fathers; and as she does not depend for the sole proof of her claim upon the former, still less does she depend for it upon the latter. There are persons who argue as if not only the Catholic Church is to stand or fall by the language of the Fathers, but upon their own interpretation of that language; they reject the teaching of the living Church as to what the Fathers mean, just as they reject her teaching as to what the Scripture means. Yet it is not the Fathers who constitute the Church; they presuppose her existence; they perpetually appeal to her judgment: she is their mother, not they her mother. One would really suppose, from the style of argument adopted by some writers, that the ‘pillar and ground of the truth’ was not the ‘house of the living God,’ not the ‘body of Christ;’ but that it was an artificial composition, made by amateur theologians out of the literary fragments of the Fathers. Such, however, was not the idea of S. Cyprian about the Church: ‘We are born out of her parturition, nourished by her milk, animated by her

spirit' (De Unit. l. iii. c. xxiv.); nor of Origen:  
'The Church, illuminated by the light of Christ, is  
herself made the light of the world' (In Gen. Hom.  
i. n. 6).

**TRADITION AS A VEHICLE OF CHRISTIAN  
DOCTRINE.**





## § 1.

THE heading of this article will show in what sense I am about to treat of tradition. As the word 'faith' is sometimes used to signify the objects themselves that are believed, and sometimes the assent of the mind to the objects thus believed, so 'tradition' has two meanings, namely, the doctrines that are conveyed by the mode of tradition, and the mode or channel of conveyance itself. It is with the second meaning alone that I am now concerned.

Protestants are often perplexed to understand why Catholics lay so much stress upon the value of tradition as a criterion of Christian truth. It appears to them that nothing is more likely than that the original doctrines of the Gospel, however purely they may have been held in the very earliest period of the Church, would be exposed to corruption by the process of transmission through the minds and language of succeeding generations. Their very natural misapprehension arises in a great measure from confounding the kingdom of the one Church with mankind in general, and from not understanding the exceptional nature, principles, and disciplinary laws of the Church by means of which the tradition of religious truth is effectually preserved from the perils that would surround it in any other condition of things. The following observations will be sufficient for my present purpose, which is rather that of explanation than discussion.

When the truths of Christianity were taught by the Apostles, they were not sown at random—broadcast as

it were—and left to take their chance amongst men like the ideas of mere thinkers. They were imparted by the Apostles to their disciples, and these disciples formed, with their pastors, that living society called the Church. The truth was lodged as a sacred message and deposit in the keeping of this society. For a considerable period it was taught orally only, and then, as occasions arose, portions of it were consigned to writing, and were also in this form intrusted to the guardianship of those to whom it was addressed. The mode of teaching, however, by the living ministry, begun by Christ and followed by His Apostles after Him, was never changed, the teaching pastorate being an essential part of the constitution of the Church of Christ, and which none but Christ or a new revelation could modify, still less abrogate. This method secured what was of vital importance in a matter of salvation—the real meaning, and not the bare dead letter only, of revelation. Living teachers could alone so present revelation to the varying minds of men as to convey to them the exact idea of the truth, and prevent them from misunderstanding its purport, either through the actual insufficiency of the written portion of revelation to teach the whole faith—an object for which it was never intended, and to which it is inadequate—or through the insufficiency of mute language which cannot answer questions, and so resolve ambiguities which are latent beneath the outward form of the expressed doctrine. ‘Ye are the light of the world;’ ‘ye are the salt of the earth,’ are words that enunciate a principle as well as narrate a fact. ‘We,’ says S. Paul, ‘are the odour of Christ.’ To be ‘mindful’ of the Apostle is declared to be equivalent to keeping the ordinances (*traditions*) as he had delivered them (1 Cor. xi. 2).

Truth and falsehood are treated by S. Paul as practically identical with true and false *teachers* and their followers. The rulers of the flock are to watch as shepherds over their sheep; for 'wolves will enter in, not sparing the flock;' and what this means he explains by saying, 'That men will arise, *speaking perverse things to draw disciples after them*' (Acts xx. 29, 30). Timothy is charged before Christ to 'preach the word—to rebuke—in all patience and doctrine;' and those who will not hear him are men who will not 'endure sound doctrine;' but 'according to their own desires they will heap to *themselves teachers*.' Thus the truth is to be learned from divinely appointed teachers, who 'fulfil' their 'ministry' by teaching a message external to the learners, and which may involve some sacrifice, for it has to be *endured*. So, on the other hand, falsehood is learned from those who are chosen by the learners themselves to speak things 'according to *their own desires*;' and, as obedience to the right *teachers* is called 'hearing the truth,' so the following of wrong *teachers* is called 'a turning away to fables' (2 Tim. iv. 2-4); 'God has placed in *us* the word of reconciliation; . . . God, as it were, exhorting by us' (2 Cor. v. 19, 20), and S. Paul calls this an ambassadorial office—'the *ministry* of reconciliation' (ibid. 18-20). Christians were not mere hearers of the truth, they were 'disciples:' 'Go ye and make disciples of all nations.' They were a flock who were to be shepherded. It is important to have a correct idea of the mode in which the Gospel was made known at the beginning of Christianity, because upon the existence and nature of the living ministry depends the whole question of tradition, considered as a medium for perpetuating the matter and sense of revelation.

How, then, was the accurate *transmission* of the teaching by the pastors of the Church secured? The Apostles were personally inspired; but how, it may be asked, could they arrange for the future uncorrupted conveyance of the apostolic teaching by others, who would follow them in the ministry, but who would not inherit their inspiration.

It was secured by more than one means. In the first place, when the Apostles taught the faith, they taught also that it was to be handed down as they themselves had received it, without any doctrinal change; anathema was pronounced upon any one, even the Apostle Paul himself, or an angel, who should preach a gospel other than that of Christ which had been preached from the beginning (Gal. i. 5). The Apostles are described as *themselves* bringing into captivity every *understanding* 'unto the obedience of Christ;' if any opposition, *i.e.* of the understanding, was raised against the truth taught by the Apostles as the gospel or the faith of Christ, this opposition to the Apostles was treated as a rebellion against the law of obedience due to Christ; and they were '*ready* to avenge,' not some, but '*all* disobedience,' namely, of *the mind* against the apostolic gospel (1 Cor. x. 5).

The 'gospel of Christ,' the 'gospel of salvation,' the 'truth of the gospel,' and similar phases are practically identified by the Apostles as *theirs*; thus S. Paul speaks of '*our* gospel' (2 Cor. iv. 3) and '*my* doctrine' (2 Tim. iii. 10). The gospel could not therefore be changed by any man, inspired or not, precisely because it was the gospel of Christ, a divine message, a *law* of truth, and nothing less, of which the Apostles were the trustees and ambassadors 'in the person of Christ.'

The principle of immutability in doctrine was an

essential part of the apostolic teaching: it was a cardinal maxim of Christianity. It was not, however, enough for the Apostles merely to preach the maxim themselves; it was necessary to make it a law of the very constitution of the Church, so that when the Apostles were no more, 'the heirs of the Apostles,' as Tertullian calls them, should act on the same principle. This law was at once exemplified in the Church by the authoritative action of the Apostles as soon as ever the necessity for acting occurred. It was an essential condition of entrance into fellowship with the ministry of the Apostles that those who became their associates or successors should teach *their* doctrine and no other. Fellowship in the ministry involved fellowship in the faith of the Apostles. 'Hold the form of sound words,' says S. Paul to Timothy, '*which thou hast heard of me in faith*' (2 Tim. i. 18); 'Keep that which is *committed to thy trust*' (1 Tim. vi. 20); 'Continue thou in those things which thou hast learned, . . . *knowing of whom thou hast learned them*' (2 Tim. iii. 14). This principle of transmitting the truth is to be acted upon by Timothy towards those whom he shall admit into the ministry, as S. Paul acted towards Timothy himself: 'The things which thou hast heard of me by many witnesses, the *same commend to faithful men* who shall be fit to teach others' (2 Tim. ii. 2). To Titus he speaks of '*the common faith*' (i. 4).

If, then, no novelty was to be introduced into the original teaching of the Apostles, and no persons were to be admitted to the pastoral office of the Church, except those who agreed to teach what the Apostles had taught, and if, by necessary consequence, such teachers as should violate the above condition were to be deprived of their official authority, and cut off from the Church,

it is manifest that the true Christian doctrine would be accurately handed down *in the Church*. The very organisation of the ministry effected this result, for since all lawful succession to the office of teaching entailed necessarily the unanimous agreement both of the teachers with each other, and of the present teachers with those who had preceded them, that living channel of personal succession became a morally unbroken, and therefore a certain and uniform, vehicle for passing on the original doctrine of the Apostles.

The 'one faith' was secured from any novelty and from the possibility of corruption; for being lodged first in the unity of the Apostles as a body of pastors it remained intact in the *same* unity from generation to generation, because the succession of pastors in the Church was a real continuation of the ministerial corporate unity of the Apostles. It was its offshoot, its orderly expansion, its progressive reproduction; and though the living vessel grew by the accretion of its successive members, still the tradition of the truth which was incorporated with it from the beginning never varied in its nature and integrity. Hence S. Irenæus says that the Church, although 'spread throughout the whole world, studiously *preserves* the faith received from the Apostles as if she were a dweller in one house and had, so to speak, one soul and one and the same heart. . . . These things she proclaims as with one mouth, and teaches and *hands down*' (Hær. l. c. x.). 'The true things of the faith, which were heard from Jesus Christ from the beginning, *abide* in the holy Church' (Epiphan. adv. Hær. xlix. al. lxix.). 'Our doctrine flourishes more and more; for it does not die like human doctrine, it does not waste away like some feeble gift, for no gift of God is feeble' (Clemens Alex. Strom. l. vi.).

## § 2.

The truth originally handed down from the Apostles was preserved from oblivion, from degenerating into an opinion, and from being corrupted by change, not only by the very constitution, but by the express purpose, and incessant activity, of the Church. Doctrines even true may perish, stagnate, and be altered, if left to the chances of accident, the dispositions of independent philosophers, the bias of interested historians, or the carelessness and passions of mankind in general. But the Church, and preëminently that part of it which consists of the episcopate, whose office it is to teach with authority, exists *for the express purpose* of proclaiming the truth of Christ to the world. '*Go ye and teach all nations,*' is a divine commission which has impressed indelibly upon the Church a fundamental character inseparable from her existence; it is not a mere counsel; it operates within her almost like the natural laws of motion under which physical bodies act by virtue of the motive force imparted to them by their Creator. The tradition of apostolic truth is ever before the mind and consciousness of the Church; she watches over, guards, and propagates it without cessation; its features are always being studied with the unflagging gaze of faith and love; its voice is never mute, and she knows the ancient tones so well that she detects any variation with a subtlety of sensibility that is more than human. 'Keep the good thing committed to thy trust by the Holy Ghost' (2 Tim. i. 14); 'Be thou *vigilant*' (iv. 5); 'I have fought a good fight, I have *kept* the faith' (iv. 7); '*Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints*' (Jude ver. 3). These and similar expressions, applied originally to individuals as directions and en-



treaties, are a description of the constant character and action of the one episcopate of the Church. 'What is the Timothy of these days but either the universal Church in general, or the whole body of those who preside' (*i.e.* the bishops) 'in particular?' (Vincent. *Lirinensis*, *Commonit.* n. 27.)

The care and jealous vigilance of the Church to preserve the faith incorrupt and free from any kind of novelty were shown, from the earliest times, in various provisions, by which no persons were admitted as members of the Church, and especially none were admitted to the office of bishop who did not profess the common faith. Intercommunion of the different parts of the Church proceeded only on the acknowledged basis of a community of doctrine; and divergence of belief from the preëxisting and universal faith was followed by the judicial condemnation of those who endeavoured to introduce any opinion contrary to the one faith, and their separation from the entire body. As union with the Church involved union with her doctrine, so a deflection from her faith involved a separation from her body. 'Neither laceration nor schism can take place unless they who make them follow something *different*' (Augustinus, lib. ii. c. vii. in Crescon.). 'Communion,' said Pope Celasius, 'belongs to the faith.' 'We communicate with the apostolic Churches because there is no *difference* in their faith' (Tert. *Præsc.* xxi.).

When controversies arose as to whether persons held the faith or were heretical, one short and decisive test was to ask whether they were admitted to communion with the bishops of the Catholic Church throughout the world, and especially with the Bishop of Rome. Thus Flavian, a priest of the Church of Antioch, put the following question to Paulinus, Bishop of Antioch: 'If,

O friend, thou dost embrace the communion of Damasus' (the then Pope), 'show to us a manifest similarity of doctrine, . . . show a consent of doctrine' (Theodoret. Hist. l. v. c. iii.).

The practice of giving and demanding letters of communion, by means of which it was ascertained whether those who desired to communicate with each other in ecclesiastical fellowship held the same faith, was a powerful means of securing unity of belief. It is mentioned in the eighth General Council, held at Constantinople in 869, that 'there was a custom in the Roman Church of demanding from every stranger his testificate (*libellus*) of the faith' (Act. iv. Harduin). We know also that when a new Pope was elected he sent letters of communion, containing his profession of faith, to the patriarchs of the Church, and received back letters from them in return; these letters being not received, and communion therefore being declined or suspended until the Pope of that time was satisfied that the senders agreed in faith with the Roman See.

Letters were received by priests from bishops, by bishops from metropolitans, and by metropolitans from patriarchs. Optatus, writing about Pope Siricius, in the fourth century, says: 'With whom the whole world is united, as we are, in fellowship of communion by the correspondence of canonical letters' (Klee, On the Church, Cox's trans. p. 16, note).

The fact of visible ecclesiastical communion was the countersign of the possession of the truth; for 'these rights,' says Tertullian, 'are governed by no other principle than the one tradition of the same Sacrament' (*i.e.* the same rule of faith or creed); '*this* is the testimony of the truth' (Præsc. c. xx.).

As the faith is the tradition of the truth coming

down from the Apostles, and is preserved and passed on by the united succession of unanimous bishops, it is easy to understand the force of the expression of S. Irenæus : 'The true knowledge is the teaching of the Apostles *and the constitution of the Church*' (iv. 33, n. 8).

'Since there are many who imagine that they think as Christ did, and some of them hold different opinions from their predecessors, let the ecclesiastical preaching that has been handed down from the Apostles *through the order of succession, and which is permanent at this day in the Church*, be preserved. That alone is to be believed to be the truth which is in nothing discordant from apostolical and ecclesiastical tradition' (Origen, *De Principiis*, Præfat.).

It will be observed, that since no one was allowed to be in the Church at all unless he believed as she believed, and since this principle has been acted upon by the Catholic Church of the apostolic period, and afterwards, without any exception or break, it follows that the doctrine of the Church in every age must be unchanged, and if unchanged, that it must be as apostolic in one century as in another. The unanimity of all the members of the Catholic Church as to the faith which they hold and profess does not therefore prove merely, as it is sometimes urged, that they have all one faith at a given period of time; it proves far more. On account of the continuous action of that law by which the Church rejects from her fold all dissentients from her teaching, this consent in faith proves the identity of Catholic doctrine through all the periods of the past, from the moment when membership began to exist. Unanimity of faith in the nineteenth century is a certain sign that the doctrine held now was held in the first. Identity of the faith is inseparable from

the personal identity of the Church herself, whose essential constitution never alters; she, in a very definite sense of the term, '*lives by faith*;' if her faith were to change, she would expire. 'The holy faith of God and religion, although it has existed from the furthest antiquity, never becomes obsolete nor over-antiquated; it stands for ever, . . . for its Lord has been constituted beyond all time; wherefore *it also is not subject to time*' (Epiphanius, Adv. Hær. lvi. al. lxxvi.).

Thus antiquity of doctrine in that Church which was not only coeval with, but was and is a continuation of, the apostolic body, is truth; and truth is antiquity; and antiquity preserved by the Church, and therefore perpetually retaining its primitive life—is Catholic tradition.

### § 3.

It is evident that even if we regard the Church and her principles from only a human point of view, we recognise an organisation wonderfully adapted by the nature of its natural machinery, so to speak, for preserving and handing on the tradition of her doctrine, as originally received, without change. But this guarantee is of much higher value than anything that can be the result of a mere earthly arrangement, however wise and secure.

The integrity of Catholic tradition depends, as we have said, upon the succession of the episcopate in its original unity; and the fount and centre of this unity is the See of Peter, and the See of Peter derives its exemption from the possibility of deviating from the tradition of the teaching of Christ and His Apostles from the divine institution of Christ, according to which He built the Church on Peter and the faith of Peter, promising

that the gates of hell should not prevail against His Church so constructed, praying for him especially that his faith should not fail, commanding him to 'confirm his brethren,' and appointing him to feed His sheep and His lambs, *i.e.* the entire Church. Hence S. Gregory of Nazianzum sang of 'ancient' Rome, 'where the entire harmony of divine truth is holily guarded' (*De Vitâ Suâ Carm.* xi.).

The faithful guardianship of tradition by the successors of Peter is, therefore, supernaturally secured by the word and power of Christ as well as by the constitution of the Church. It is secured also by the actual continued presence, as well as the past words, of Christ. When He said 'Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world,' He promised to be with them in their especial mission as the teachers of His doctrines. 'All power is given to Me; . . . going, *therefore*, teach ye all nations, baptising them, teaching . . . all things whatsoever I have commanded you' (*Matt.* xxviii. 18-20). As the mission is to last until the end of the world, the presence of Christ, the supreme Teacher, is never wanting to the Apostles, who are from age to age personified and continued by their successors.

The ministry which will be able to build up the 'body of Christ,' by bringing all who will accept their teaching into 'the unity of faith,' must possess a power more than human; for this result supposes the preservation of the substance and meaning of the truth as first delivered, without change, throughout the entire course of the existence of man upon the earth, although the teachers and the taught are perpetually passing away by death. No wonder, therefore, if such a ministry is called a gift from God; for no earthly power could produce such a standing miracle. Hence S. Paul ascribes

this marvel to Christ : ' He that ascended above all the heavens that He might fill all things . . gave some apostles and some prophets, and other some evangelists, and other some pastors and doctors, . . for the *work of the ministry*.' And what is this work ? It is an especial work, by means of which the workers are to be able to save the men *to whom they are to minister* from being carried about with every *wind of doctrine*, ' until we all meet into the unity of faith.' The faith is always one and always fixed ; the peril is lest men should be swept away by exterior forces. ' Every' denotes the variety of this false teaching ; ' doctrine' shows that the danger is that of the *mind* assenting to error ; and ' wind' indicates the fleeting, unreal, fitful, and contradictory nature of the ensnaring errors. The ' faith' is a *message* of truth, and as it cannot be its own proponent, neither can it, of itself, preserve its unity or integrity ; nor can men's minds ' meet into' its unity, unless they have unanimous guides, who hold, guard, and show the way to this one faith, and who have authority strong enough to overrule the invitations of ' every wind of doctrine.' Moreover, the expression ' until we all meet' clearly proves that the faith which the minds of men up to the close of the world are to embrace is exactly that which S. Paul held, and which, although possessed by believers a million years after his death, will bring them into true fellowship with the apostolic faith and the apostolic community, as members of the same society, the body of Christ.

This unity of faith is not a subject of hope only, a thing desirable, and for producing which the best available means have been provided, but which nevertheless must always be a contingency, and may be a failure. The unity is a fact. ' Until we all meet' assumes that

we *shall* 'meet into unity.' This is to be one of the necessary results of the gift of the apostolic ministry, as an effect following a cause, and also as the fulfilment of the prayer of Christ: 'I have *given* them' (the Apostles) . . . 'Thy Word. . . Thy Word is *truth*. . . For them do I sanctify Myself, that they *also* may be sanctified in truth. And not for *them only* do I pray, but for them *also* who through *their* word shall believe in Me, that *they all* may be one, as Thou, Father, in Me and I in Thee; that they also may be one in *us*; that the *world* may believe that Thou hast sent Me' (John xvii. 14-21).

There will, therefore, be to the end of the world disciples of the Apostles, so united with them and 'their word' by *obeying their teaching*, that their unity of faith—a unity externally perceivable and conspicuous—shall be a motive for the world to believe in Christ, and for not following which the world will be held responsible by its Judge. This visible fellowship in faith with the Apostles can, however, only exist from age to age through the *visible* continuity of their successors, who hand on their rights and creed—in other words, by the concurrent tradition of their powers and faith.

The ability to accomplish this work is the ability to hand down and teach with apostolic authority the tradition of the faith. But this implies a supernatural grace corresponding to a supernatural instrumentality.

Christ is the original and master-builder of His own Church: '*I will build My Church*.' But He carries on the 'edification' by earthly under-builders, who become His effectual workmen through that divine operation which flows into the ministry from the Head. Thus Christ builds up His own body, the Church, both as being its fountal source of authority and grace, and as

abiding in it. And yet, because He uses secondary and human builders, the body is said to be continually *building up itself* (Ephes. iv. 11-16).

That the Church possesses a divine assistance, by means of which she is enabled to preserve the tradition of the faith, is also abundantly evident from the fact that the Holy Ghost dwells within her as a permanent Teacher of the truth. The 'one body' possesses the 'one faith,' because it is filled with the 'one Spirit,' which Spirit is the 'spirit of Christ,' the 'Spirit of Truth.' The communication of His spirit is the communication of *power*: 'Stay you in the city until you be endued with power from on high' (Luke xxiv. 49). The power was bestowed in order to make them witnesses of Christ, and therefore of His teaching, in a way beyond that of mere human fidelity as reporters of facts: 'You shall *receive power, and you shall be witnesses* unto Me . . to the uttermost part of the earth' (Acts i. 8).

'The Holy Ghost will teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said to you' (John xiv. 26). This Teacher of all truth is to instruct by internal habitation: 'He shall abide with you, and shall be *in you*' (ver. 17). The gift, moreover, shall never be withdrawn: 'The Father shall *give* you another Paraclete, *that He may abide with you for ever.*' Perpetuity was an express object of the gift. The Spirit of Truth was given in this sense, and with these promises, not to individuals, but to the Apostles as a body. 'He shall be *in you*;' in you, that is, as a body whose unity was constituted in Peter by Christ; 'in you,' as a body commissioned to teach the 'gospel of the kingdom' to the end of the world. As Christ had united them in a certain order, and had been their Teacher or divine Rabbi whilst He was visible on earth,



so the 'other Paraclete' was to be with and in them as a soul inhabiting a compact body.

'He shall bring all things to your remembrance,' is a promise that evidently is not *confined* to the Apostles as individuals, but has a range as extensive as that of the Presence itself. If the Apostles are to live on in the successors to their ministry and to teach all nations for all time, then the *memory* of the 'one faith' will be preserved in the corporate mind of these successors, without any failure through forgetfulness or obscurity, by the same Holy Ghost who descended as a gift upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost to abide 'for ever.' 'What memory is to the single man, such is the whole tradition of the truth in the bosom of the Church,' observes a writer who is as profound and accurate as he is chastely eloquent in everything that proceeds from his pen (*Allies, Formation of Christendom, part ii. p. 159*). 'This animation' (*i.e.* of the Church by the Spirit of Truth) 'is like the Head, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. It is not of any past time more or less than of the present or the future' (*ibid. p. 126*).

That the power to guard the true faith is a grace is evident from S. Paul's words to Timothy: 'Hold the *form of sound words* which thou hast heard of me in faith,'—this form is manifestly a sacred trust,—'the good thing committed to *thy trust*;' and how is it to be held? By the tenacity of mere physical memory or moral fidelity only? Certainly not. 'Keep' it '*by the Holy Ghost, Who dwelleth in us*' (2 Tim. i. 14).

If an individual teacher, like Timothy, is reminded that his capacity for 'holding the form of sound words,' including of course their meaning, for otherwise the bare letter would be useless, is to come from the Holy

Ghost, it is easy to understand how the Church, which is permanently and officially inhabited by the Spirit of Truth, and is called the pillar and ground of the truth,' preserves her tradition infallibly fresh through the same Spirit.

Such, moreover, has always been the belief of the Catholic Church. Thus S. Irenæus speaks of the Church as an excellent vessel in which the preaching of the Apostles has been deposited, and where it is guarded by that Holy Spirit Who ever makes the vessel young in which He is; and *amongst the operations* of the Spirit he mentions the gift of Apostles, &c. (1 Cor. xii. 28); 'of which operation those are not partakers who do not run to the church' (Hær. iii. 24). It is he, too, who, as quoted before, speaks of the 'gifts of the truth' being linked 'with the succession of the episcopate' (Hær. iv. 36). S. Augustine attributes to 'God the Indweller' the security that 'speculation does not run into all sorts of error' (In Ps. ix. n. 12). S. Chrysostom, commenting on 2 Tim. i. 14, says, 'Keep, &c. How? By the Holy Ghost; because it is not possible for a soul or a power that is human to keep worthily so many trusts' (Hom. iii. n. 1). 'Following, therefore, in all things the confessions of the holy Fathers which they gave forth, the Holy Spirit speaking in them' (Cyril, Ep. ad Nestor.).

It is, however, superfluous to insist more upon this point, because the Church, in the language used at her Councils, has never ceased to affirm two things: (1), that she follows the voice of tradition, and (2) that in the accomplishment of her office as guardian and interpreter of the faith she relies on the supernatural aid of the Holy Ghost. The last Council of all begins by declaring that 'our Redeemer has at no time failed to be

at the side of His beloved Spouse when teaching,' &c. (Conc. Vat. Const. Dogm. de Fide).

Those, therefore, who deny the value of Catholic tradition on the broad ground of the liability of *all* tradition to change and corruption, argue on a totally erroneous basis. For, on account of that essential principle which excludes novelty in doctrine as a vital canon of the Church ; on account of the very nature of her mission as ambassador for Christ in preaching only what He and the Holy Ghost originally taught the Apostles ; on account, too, of the strict organisation of her ministry in unity, by lawful succession, together with the various modes adopted by her for the exclusion of antagonistic elements in the shape of new opinions and false teachers, not to mention the important position which doctrine occupies in the legislation, and even daily worship, of the Church ; and above all, on account of the presence within her of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth,—there is, in favour of her members, a combination of guarantees for the safe transmission of apostolic truth, which for certainty and continuity has no parallel in the nature of any other kind of traditional knowledge, in the fidelity of any other historical testimony, nor in the constitution and circumstances of any other community, secular or religious. ‘The Church exceeds all other things, having nothing either like or equal to herself’ (Clemens, Alex. Stromat. l. vii.).

‘Let us believe the tradition of the Church. It is tradition ; seek no further’ (S. Chrysost. Hom. lv. in Thess.).

## THE ATONEMENT AND PURGATORY.



## CHAPTER I.

### HARMONY OF THE TWO DOCTRINES.

THE doctrine of Purgatory is often alleged to be virtually a denial that the satisfaction of Christ on the Cross was complete, and that He is the sole Saviour of the world. The argument has been stated in the following form :

‘ If sinners can pay a part of their own debt to God, would they not become in part their own Saviour?—contrary to what the Word of God declares: “ The Blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin” (1 John i. 7). “ Neither is there salvation in any other” (Acts iv. 12). If Christ’s Blood cleanseth from *all* sin, then there can be no Purgatory.’

This objection is founded in a total misapprehension of the Catholic doctrine of satisfaction. The word ‘satisfaction’ is applied to Christ, and the same term is also applied to the Christian; but its meaning in the former case is widely different from its meaning in the latter, and to confound the two is entirely to misrepresent the Catholic faith. The merits of the God-man are infinite, and His atonement is more than a sufficient expiatory oblation for all the sins of men in the past, present, and the future, whether actual or possible. He is the only Saviour, for none can have pardon and eternal life except through His precious Blood and Holy Name. This is the fundamental article of the Catholic creed. If this be true, it is evident that no

sinner can either redeem his own soul from sin and eternal death, or pay any debt of punishment due to sin, which shall be able, like the satisfaction of Christ, to appease the justice of God *by its own virtue*, apart from any other meritorious cause.

But although the kind of satisfaction by which Christ becomes our Redeemer is impossible to man, there is *another* kind of which we are capable, through the grace of God, the merciful acceptance of God, and our sanctifying union with the all-saving Victim. Man can so suffer and chastise himself in life, as to mitigate some, at least, of that *temporal* punishment which remains due to his sins, although they have been forgiven, as to their *eternal* penalty, through the Blood of Christ. This satisfaction, however, derives all its value from that of the Cross: 'Whilst we suffer in satisfying for our sins, we are made conformable to Jesus Christ, Who has satisfied for our sins, *from Whom all our sufficiency is*; . . . all our glorying is in Christ, *in Whom* we live, *in Whom* we merit, *in Whom* we satisfy, doing works worthy of penance, which have their efficacy from Him, are by Him offered to the Father, and through Him are accepted by the Father' (Conc. Trid. sess. xiv. c. viii.). How, then, can a satisfaction which is finite, entirely secondary, dependent *solely* upon Christ's merits for any excellency it possesses, and available exclusively for obtaining the remission of a temporal, and not an everlasting penalty, be said, with any show of reason, to deny the perfection of Christ's atonement, or to make a man into his own Saviour?

The same principle of argument that applies to the satisfaction that the Christian penitent can offer to God in his lifetime, also applies to that which he undergoes after death. For although in life the sinner suffers

voluntarily, and his debt is therefore more easily remitted, whilst, after death, he must endure the strict rigour of the law of divine justice, without any power on his part to lessen or remove the penalty, still, this payment of a debt to God no more interferes with the redeeming satisfaction of Christ in the one case than in the other. The compulsory pains of Purgatory in the other world, like the freely-chosen mortification of penance in this, are expiatory *solely* through the merits of the one Saviour, Jesus Christ. 'If Christ's Blood cleanseth from *all* sin, then there can be no Purgatory.' Why so? Where is the logical link between the premise and the conclusion? There is none.

In the first place, if by cleansing from sin is meant the purification of the soul by the indwelling grace of the Holy Ghost, Purgatory does not to any degree, or in any sense, coöperate in *such* a 'cleansing:' the only connection it has with it consists in the fact that justification, of which Christ's Atonement is the sole meritorious cause, is a previous and indispensable condition for the admission of any soul to penal purification after death: no unjustified sinner can enter Purgatory; his only place is hell. But if Purgatory itself has *no* share whatever, according to the Catholic faith, in that cleansing of sin which is called justification, how can the *doctrine* which affirms its reality possibly clash with, or detract from, the truth expressed in those words of Scripture, 'the Blood of Christ *cleanseth* from all sin,' which are cited to disprove Purgatory? They do not touch the point in the remotest way.

Secondly, if by 'cleansing from all sin' it is meant that the Blood-shedding of Christ exempts the sinner from the *eternal* punishment of sin, Purgatory cannot



interfere with that effect in any conceivable manner, for its only sphere is that of *temporal* pain; therefore, to admit the truth of Purgatory cannot involve a denial of the all-sufficiency of Christ's Blood to exempt from the *everlasting* penalty due to sin.

Thirdly, if by '*all sin*' is meant, not only deliverance from all eternal, but also from all temporal punishment, whether before or after death, then the following distinction must be made. It is true that the Blood of Christ is *sufficient in itself* to save a man from eternal punishment, and if it can save from that which is eternal, it can, *à fortiori*, save from that which is less than eternal. It can save, therefore, from all punishment, temporal and eternal.

To affirm, however, that Christ's Blood is sufficient to free from all temporal as well as eternal punishment, and that in frequent instances it actually effects this perfect liberation, so that many justified souls enter into the full enjoyment of heaven at the instant of their departure from the body, is one thing; but it is quite another thing to assume that *all* the souls of those who die in the grace of God are privileged to 'see God face to face' without a moment's delay, and without being subjected to some penal detention. The first statement does not imply the second, nor in any way lead up to it by inference.

I am not now engaged in discussing whether there be a Purgatory or not; I am simply answering an objection drawn from a certain text in Scripture; and I affirm that this text is utterly silent upon anything that can give support to the objection. It says that the Blood of Christ cleanses from all sin, but it does not say when, how, or under what conditions the cleansing takes place; nor whether sin means here

the guilt or moral deformity that it has produced in the soul, or the penalty also incurred with it; nor, again, whether the penalty includes all the possible penalty, temporal and eternal, that is due from the guilty soul, or only the eternal penalty of hell. We look in vain to this text alone for answers to these questions, and yet it is supposed to extinguish the Catholic doctrine by the mere sound of its words.

This passage of Scripture, and others of a kindred nature, can conclude nothing against the Catholic doctrine, unless it be assumed that the full and perfect sufficiency of Christ's death to save from all sin, and all the consequences of sin, is a proposition identical with the full and perfect *application* to the souls of men of that sufficiency without any limitation or suspension of its effects. This is not the case. The virtue of the saving Blood flows, according to the will of Him Who shed it, gratuitously from its infinite source, for no human being could ever have had a particle of right to such a gift; but it flows according to certain definite laws of justice and mercy, and its power operates in degrees of more and less, according to conditions which it is within the capacity of man's free will to influence.

Forgiveness has its gradations: Mary Magdalene was 'forgiven much' because she had 'loved much.' It has its conditions: 'Forgive *us* our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.' Our Lord said to the Pharisees, 'Give alms, and behold *all* things are clean unto you' (Luke xi. 41); a doctrine which, as it was addressed to men who had been guilty of rapine, seems to be a re-proclamation (with the additional sanction of the Christian dispensation) of the prophet's counsel to Nebuchodonosor: 'Redeem thou thy sins with

alms and thy iniquities with works of mercy to the poor' (Daniel iv. 34). Forgiveness of sin on the part of God was frequently followed by *some* chastisement, although the greater penalty had been remitted. The rebellious Israelites were forgiven, but none of them were allowed to see the promised land (Numbers xiv. 20-38); Mary (Miriam) was smitten by leprosy for murmuring with her brother Aaron against Moses; and although at the intercession of Moses the progress of the disease was stayed and she was healed, nevertheless God commanded her to be cast out of the camp for seven days (Numbers xii. 15). David was forgiven: 'The Lord hath taken away thy sin;' but he did not escape all punishment: 'For this thing the child that is born of thee shall not live' (2 Kings, al. Samuel, Prot. version, xii. 13, 14).

Why did our Lord ordain that the *very first impression* the Jews were to receive about the nature of Christianity was one that led them to connect the idea of it with external as well as internal mortification—for such was the character of John the Baptist's mission? Why did He also praise that type of repentance which was found in the Ninevites, when they fasted in sackcloth and ashes, and even gave their cattle no food or drink (Jonas iii. 7-10), and by these '*their works*, turned away the fierce anger of God'?

It is evident that the new law of grace did not annul directly or indirectly the old principle of the propitiatory value of penitential suffering in the estimation of God; a principle universally acknowledged in the divine providence, as manifested in the ages prior to the Gospel.

Where is there in the whole New Testament any shadow of a trace of such abolition? If the Protestant theory of the 'law of liberty' were true, then the cleans-

ing power of the Blood of Christ ought to have removed all liability to even temporary punishment on the part of the forgiven sinner. Why should redeemed sinners have to suffer any kind of affliction in connection with their sins, if Christ has taken away actually and in every instance *all* the penal consequences of sin by His own suffering? We find abundant proof to the contrary in Scripture. S. Paul describes 'indignation and *revenge*' as amongst the fruits of 'a sorrow that is according to God : ' *revenge* is clearly a step beyond sorrow, for this sorrow *worketh* *revenge* (2 Cor. vii. 11). Even Calvin says, in reference to this 'revenge,' that 'the *more severe* we are upon ourselves in condemning our sins, the more we ought to *hope to find God propitious*' (Instit. iii. 15). Some of those who approached the Holy Eucharist in unfit dispositions were punished by sickness, and others by death; upon which the Apostle observes, 'If we would *judge ourselves*, we should not *be judged*;' and this judgment is manifestly of an afflictive nature, for 'whilst we are judged' (that is by God) 'we are chastised by the Lord, that we be not *condemned*,' i.e. eternally, 'with the world' (1 Cor. xi. 30-32). 'How,' says S. Chrysostom, commenting on these words, 'shall I exact punishment from myself? Pour forth abundant tears, afflict thyself with labours and watchings' (Hom. xlii. In Matth.). 'Such as I love,' is the declaration of God, 'I rebuke and chastise: be zealous, therefore, and do penance' (Apoc. iii. 19).

'I know thy works and thy *labour*; . . but I have something against thee: . . be mindful, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and *do penance and do the first works*' (ii. 2-5).

The only mode of evading the doctrine so clearly manifested by many examples recorded in Scripture of

the temporal punishment of the justified, by their Creator and Redeemer, is to distort the real character of those events, and thus to neutralise their moral and logical force.

The Reformers generally met the difficulty by affirming that such marks of God's anger were only deterrent and remedial, and not acts of punitive *justice*. But this interpretation is a mere subterfuge, and is contrary to the obvious sense of Holy Scripture, where God is often said to have smitten His servants on account of their sin, as in the instances of Moses, Mary (or Miriam), David, and others. The punishments were doubtless medicinal correctives for the future, but they were also a vindication of the past; and as far as the language of Scripture is a guide, the last mentioned was their chief object. It cannot be denied that all who under the Old Law were saved from eternal death were pardoned by virtue of the foreseen merits of the future Redeemer; since, therefore, they were forgiven the greater penalty for His sake, and nevertheless were not exempted, on that account, from some lesser penalty, what is the obvious inference? Clearly that between *that* mercy and *that* chastisement there was no contradiction whatever; that they were parts of one divine providence. But if this harmony existed under a dispensation which was antecedent indeed to Christianity, but also was preparatory to it, and which conveyed beforehand to penitent sinners the healing effects of Christ's future death, why should a change take place when Christ actually came and suffered on the Cross? Why should the forgiveness of eternal punishment become suddenly inconsistent with the exaction of temporal punishment, and yet always compatible with it before? To prove this alteration in God's providential

dealings with His children some distinct revelation is required, and none can be produced.

In reference to the principle involved in the infliction of temporary suffering on account of sin, it has been acutely remarked that, 'if there be no temporal punishments for the righteous, there are then no eternal punishments for the unrighteous; on the other hand, if there are eternal punishments for the latter, so there must be temporal punishments for the former, when after baptism they relapse into sin; for the question here is as to the notion and essence of punishments, and not as to any of their accidental qualities. If they be in their *nature* purely remedial they cannot be destined, in the one case, *solely* for cure, and in the other *solely* for chastisement, in the strict sense of the word. It was an inconsistency in the Reformers to leave intact the scriptural doctrine of hell-torments, and yet to look on punishments solely as the means of amelioration' (Moehler's Symbolism, b. i. c. iv. sec. 33 Eng. trans.). Even Luther at one time recognised the connection between sin in Christians, and punishment, as its correlative. 'Our Mother the Christian Church, when from kindness of heart she wishes to obviate the chastening hand of God, punishes her children with some *penances of satisfaction lest they fall under the divine rod*. This voluntary punishment is not everything, as the adversaries' (meaning the Catholics) 'will have it, yet it is *necessary*. But the best thing of all would be if we were to chastise ourselves' (Assertio xli. Art. cont. Indulg. art. 5).

This doctrine, then, of the justness, fitness, and advantage of the temporal punishment of individual penitent sinners does not, in the slightest degree, clash with, trench upon, or derogate from, the completeness

of the satisfaction of Christ offered as the price of the redemption of mankind in general from eternal condemnation. So far, indeed, is the one from being in contradiction or rivalry to the other, that the penitent's desire to punish himself for his violation of the law of the Gospel springs out of that very faith, hope, and love, which has been infused into his soul by the Holy Ghost, and which is the uniting link between him and Christ. It is precisely because he believes that Christ has died gratuitously for him, and because he loves Christ as his Saviour, and because he knows that Christ has given him more than sufficient grace to keep His law—'If ye love *Me* keep My commandments'—that his regenerate Christian instinct moves him to choose, and submit joyfully to, penal mortification in order to restore, in however imperfect a degree, that balance between his obligations to his Master and their fulfilment, which has been culpably disarranged by his voluntary rebellion. He is not by his conduct discrediting or undervaluing the liberality of Christ, the all-atoning Victim for sin; but he is thus practically obeying the 'mind of Christ' that is in him, for he is 'suffering with Christ,' and 'growing up into Him in all things' (Eph. iv. 15).

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## CHAPTER II.

### DISBELIEF IN PURGATORY: ITS THEOLOGICAL ROOT.

IN order to understand the real reason why Protestants, as a class—for there may be individual exceptions—reject so decisively the doctrine of Purgatory, it

is necessary to bear in mind the leading dogma of Protestantism—justification by faith alone. This doctrine, which is the very axis upon which the whole system introduced by Luther turns, is totally incompatible with the principles which are radically involved in a belief in Purgatory. Whoever believes in Purgatory must necessarily hold the following tenets: he must admit the power of the baptised Christian to keep by grace the law of Christ; his obligation to fulfil that duty; his just exposure to punishment from God if through his own fault he breaks that condition; and his obligation to undergo punishment in the other world for any sins whose guilt or penalties have not been entirely remitted to him before death through the means appointed by God for that purpose. Omit one of these doctrines and Purgatory falls to the ground, by a logical necessity. But how is it possible to hold them, with any shadow of consistency, in conjunction with that thorough, genuine offspring and fundamental error of Protestantism, justification by faith only? The two doctrines clash irreconcilably upon every inch of theological ground. The Protestant doctrine says that faith alone justifies, by appropriating to the soul, as by a spiritual hand, the atonement, merits, and obedience of Christ; so that as long as faith exists, the ‘finished work of Christ’—His atoning death and His observance of the moral and divine law—is the imputed personal property of the believer. This holiness is *external* to him, for it is Christ’s individual righteousness; nevertheless, it is really accredited to him by God *as if it were his own* righteousness; he is clothed with Christ’s mantle of sanctity; his sins are hidden by Christ, so that no condemnation, and therefore no punishment, can befall him, however much and often he may sin against the



law of the Gospel. This is expressed in Luther's words, 'How rich the Christian is! For even if he wishes, he *cannot* lose his salvation through any amount of sins he may commit, unless he wills *not to believe*; no sin can damn him except unbelief. If his faith returns or stands upon the divine promise made to the baptised, all things else are swallowed up by the same faith' (De Captivit. Bab.) 'No matter what works thou mayest do,' wrote Melancthon, 'even if they be sins, look not to thy works, weigh the promise of God, confide in it, and doubt not that thou hast *no longer a Judge* in heaven, but *only a Father*, Who cherisheth thee in His heart as a parent his child' (Loc. Theol.).

'We obtain forgiveness of sins not on account of love or works, but by faith alone in Christ' (Melancthon, Apol. iv. de Justif.).

According to this system, the obedience of the Christian to the law of Christ, even if possible, can have no practical bearing upon the attainment of salvation; therefore none upon the forgiveness of sins; therefore none upon the remission of the punishment due to those sins on account of the offended justice of God.

Now if no works of the Christian, however 'good' or 'pleasing' to God (Coloss. i. 10) they may be, can in the slightest degree coöperate, as a necessary condition, towards his acquisition of eternal life, and therefore towards his *exemption from everlasting punishment*, for that is included in the very idea of eternal life, it is only consistent with the same principle to hold that no actions of the sinner, however penitential, can have any bearing upon punishments due to sin which are *less* than eternal. This reasoning is evident even on the supposition that, according to Catholic doctrine, the

justified Christian can be liable to such a debt, either in this world or the next.

According to the doctrine of justification by faith only, the obedience of Christ is not only ceaselessly propitiatory for all sins, and therefore for all the possible penalties of sin, temporal and eternal, before death and after death, but wherever and so long as faith exists in any soul, the obedience, merits, and propitiation of Christ belong to that soul. Faith actually applies and infallibly appropriates to each believer all the benefits, without exception, that flow from redemption. Such is the Protestant doctrine; and if it were true, it would follow inevitably that whatever other advantages the good works or repentance of a sinner might possess, they could have no share in the process of securing eternal life, none in obviating divine punishments, none in expiation of offences, even in a secondary imperfect sense of the word. Nay further, not only are the works of the justified useless, upon the Protestant theory, as means of obtaining from God any diminution or remission of punishment, but the contrary doctrine is denounced as a pernicious mode of denying the all-sufficiency of Christ's Atonement. Purgatory can have no place, therefore, in a creed that erects 'faith only' into a perfect shield against any evil that can come from sin.

As good works can do nothing for man, in regard to sin, according to the Protestant doctrine, it becomes of no importance to distinguish between different degrees of sin; for if faith *extinguishes* the penal claims upon us of *all* sin, then it is an immaterial question whether some sins are greater than others, and whether some dissolve our friendship with God, and so ruin us for ever, unless repented of; whilst others offend God, and entail some chastisement, without condemning us ever-

lastingly. If there is no penalty incurred by the believer as long as he believes, it would be unmeaning in him to classify sins as mortal and venial ; all are in his view mortal because they are violations of the law of an infinite God, and therefore they deserve eternal misery ; but since all are pardoned to the believer, through faith in Christ, the question as to degrees of sin is impracticable. For this reason the Protestant does not recognise any varying *degrees* of punishment as due to God from sinners ; because since the question of degrees in *sin* is not an element of consideration or anxiety, why should that of *penalties* be ? Sin and its penalty are equally swallowed up by the doctrine of justification by faith. Besides denying that good works had any bearing upon the forgiveness of sin, or the penalties naturally due to it, the Reformers, in order still more effectually to destroy the idea that there could be any utility in obedience as propitiatory of the mercy of God, boldly denied the possibility of keeping the commandments of the Gospel. According to them, to obey the moral law was both unnecessary, 'because Christ abolished the right of the law, especially the *Ten Commandments*, when He became an Anathema for us' (Luther, Comm. in Gal.) ; and impossible, because '*we cannot in this life satisfy the law*' (Melancthon, Apol. iv. De Dilect. s. 46). Hence, as Moehler points out, Luther affirmed that Christ was only a teacher and lawgiver accidentally, in the same way as He was incidentally a healer of diseases, His chief mission being '*not to teach, but to fulfil the Law*;' and, consistently with this idea, the Gospel was regarded as, in the strictest and truest sense of the term, not a rule of life, but *only* the announcement of pardon and mercy (Symbolism, b. i. s. 24). This noxious doctrine was condemned by the Council of Trent, which anathe-

matished those who declared 'that the observation of the commands of God was impossible to the justified man. For God does not order things impossible; but by ordering He enjoins thee to do what thou canst do, and to ask for what thou art unable to do, and He assists thee that thou mayest have the ability to do' (Sess. vi. De Justif. c. xi.).

Protestantism did not even stop at the assertion that it was impossible for any one to obey the moral law; it denounced all human obedience as more or less wicked: 'Every good work is damnable,' said Luther, 'and a mortal sin if it be judged by the judgment of God. The *best done* of all good works is a venial sin, and even that is not venial in its own nature, but through the mercy of God' (Assert. Omn. Art.). 'Even the works that proceed from the Spirit of God,' said Melancthon, 'are themselves unclean, because they are done in a flesh which is still impure' (Loc. Theolog.). 'The good works of the faithful,' said Calvin, 'are in a certain manner polluted' (De Necess. Ref. Eccles.; quoted in Moehler's Symbolism, b. i. s. 22).

Whatever modifications the subsequent disciples of Protestantism may have chosen or shall choose to introduce into their system of religion, it is clear that the doctrine of justification by faith only, in its genuine sense, separates by an impassable line all connection between the actions of the justified and the forgiveness of sins, and therefore denies absolutely that the remission of eternal or temporal punishment can be in any way dependent upon them.

Since it is certain, as we have already shown, that the punishment of justified sinners during this life does not interfere with the doctrine that 'the Blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin' (1 John i. 7), and that 'He is

the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world' (ibid. ii. 2), it follows that the temporary chastisement of the justified *after death* must be equally consistent with the same revealed doctrine of universal redemption from all sins. If the living who through the mercy of Christ have been forgiven the debt, which they owed, of eternal condemnation, should not have obtained remission of *all* the *temporary* punishment due to the justice of that God, Who will call us to account for even 'every idle word,' *before* they are summoned to the judgment-seat, they must leave this world with the uncanceled obligation still resting upon them. There is no such thing as chance in the other world; the divine law is supreme there, and without 'let or hindrance;' death does not revolutionise the conditions of justice by introducing a lawless mercy; it parts the soul from the body, but it has no power to strike off, by any intrinsic virtue of its own, the chain of liability to chastisement with which the justified soul was bound up to the moment of its physical liberation from the flesh. If that soul was not sufficiently purified to be admitted at once to the vision of God and to the eternal reward, although infallibly certain of eventually 'entering into the joy of the Lord,' how can the mere process of death—a process which is not supernatural, but a penalty and result of a fallen nature—accomplish that purification? How can death *add* anything meritorious of the divine favour which did not exist in the soul before death? How can death, which ends for ever the probation of man, and is therefore the stopping-point of all merit and demerit, invest the soul with any new claim to mercy? If the souls of the justified can no longer do any voluntary penance because the 'night' has come 'when no man *can* work,' and if

separation from the body brings with it no new element of merit, the next question is, does the perfect satisfaction of Christ operate *by itself* so as to abolish, as soon as death takes place, the debt of temporary punishment which was still owing to God at the last moment of life? There is no indication in Scripture, and no probability derivable from reason, by which any such idea can be established. The merits of Christ's satisfaction do not act automatically, without conditions or channels of communication; they become available only when they are applied to individual souls, and they are only applied after death, as before death, on the actual fulfilment of certain definite prerequisites. In the absence of these there is nothing in the other world that is able to diminish, still less to take away entirely, those temporal pains which departed souls were under the obligation of enduring, at the time of death, on account of their sins. If *any* pains remain to be suffered after death, the sole reason is not that the merits of Christ were ever insufficient to remit that liability, but that they were not made applicable during life to the full extent necessary for a total pardon of both the guilt and punishment of every sin committed, an application which it was once in the power of the sinner to have made. If the pains that have been justly incurred through such neglect remain unalleviated after death, the reason will be precisely the same; not the insufficiency of Christ's merits, not the defectiveness of His expiation, but the want of their due application by those means which God in His infinite love has abundantly left in the hands of the Church of the living upon the earth, namely, the Sacrifice of the Altar and the offering of indulgences, prayers, alms-deeds, and other pious works, in their behalf.

Thus, when the doctrine of Purgatory is examined, as it is held by Catholics, and not as it is frequently misunderstood and misrepresented by Protestants, any impartial person can see that, whether he believes in its truth or not, it in no degree obscures the doctrine of salvation by grace, or denies the infinite value of the Blood of the Lamb as a propitiation for the sins of the world. On the contrary, he who believes in Purgatory believes in a special dispensation of condescending love, by which those who have failed in their service of God during life, though not so grievously as to have forfeited heaven, are enabled by the power of the satisfaction of Christ to enter into their final rest through the door of a suffering, limited in time, capable of being relieved, far less bitter than is deserved, and even momentary and light when compared with the 'eternal weight of glory' that awaits the just when the hour of their purification shall be ended.

GOOD WORKS.

**R**





## CHAPTER I.

### OBEDIENCE AND SALVATION.

It is one amongst the many anomalies of Protestantism that so many of those who profess to make the Holy Scriptures their sole rule of faith should hold, as a vital dogma, that which can only be believed by disbelieving the explicit revelation of God.

The following passages are only a small selection out of many others which prove that the Christian contributes by his good works towards the attainment of salvation. If any one can teach us the way of life it must surely be He Who is '*the Life*' itself. What, then, is His language? 'What shall I *do* that I may have life everlasting?' was the question put to Christ; and His answer was as direct as the question: 'If thou wilt enter into life' (*i.e.* life *everlasting*) 'keep the Commandments' (Matt. xix. 16, 17). 'He that *doeth the will of My Father* Who is in heaven, *he* shall enter into the kingdom of heaven' (Matt. vii. 21). 'They that have *done good* things shall come forth unto the resurrection of life, but they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment' (John v. 29).

It was the 'unprofitable' servant who was 'cast into the exterior darkness,' and the 'good and faithful servant' to whom it was said, 'Enter *thou* into the joy of thy Lord;' the faithfulness being described as the fruitful use of the 'goods' or 'talents' committed to his charge, and the examination of the respective results being called a '*reckoning*' of the Master with his ser-

vants (Matt. xxv. 15-29). 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for *theirs* is the kingdom of heaven'—'the merciful, for *they* shall obtain mercy'—'the clean in heart, for *they* shall see God'—'and they that suffer persecution for justice' sake, for *theirs* is the kingdom of heaven' (Matt. v. 3-10). 'Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit shall be cut down, and shall be cast into the fire' (vii. 19). 'The Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then will He render to every man according to *his works*' (Matt. xvi. 27). Eternal woe is denounced against those who neglect such works of mercy as relieving the poor, visiting the sick and prisoners; and eternal life to those who fulfil these duties, and who are therefore called the just: 'These shall go into everlasting punishment, but *the just* into life everlasting' (Matt. xxv. 46).

The teaching of the Apostles is precisely the same. The Son of God learned obedience by the things which He suffered, and being consummated He became to all *that obey Him* the cause of eternal salvation (Heb. v. 8, 9). 'God . . . will render to every man according to his works; to them indeed who, according to *patience in good works, seek glory and honour and incorruption, eternal life*' (Rom. ii. 7). 'Being made free from sin and become *servants* to God, you have *your fruit* unto sanctification, and the end life everlasting' (Rom. vi. 22). What is meant by being 'servants' is evident from the following words: 'To whom you yield yourselves *servants*, his servants you are *whom you obey*, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto justice' (vi. 16). Thus eternal life is promised to those who obey God: 'With fear and trembling *work out your salvation*' (Phil. ii. 12). 'Charge the rich . . . to be rich *in good works*,

... to lay up in store *for themselves* a good foundation against the time to come, that they may *lay hold on the true life*' (1 Tim. vi. 19). '*So run that you may obtain,*' i.e. '*the incorruptible crown*' (1 Cor. ix. 24, 25).

S. Peter's doctrine differs not from that of S. Paul : 'If you invoke as Father Him Who without respect of persons *judgeth according to every one's work*, converse in fear during the time of your sojourning here' (1 Pet. i. 17). 'Let them also that suffer according to the will of God, commend their souls *in good deeds* to the *faithful* Creator' (iv. 19). Thus writes S. James : 'As the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead' (ii. 26); 'Be ye *doers* of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves' (i. 22). What, again, can be more decisive as to the necessity of obedience to salvation than the declarations of S. John : '*If we walk in the light*, as He also is the Light, . . . the Blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin' (1 John i. 7)? But what is 'walking in the light' if it be not the imitation of Christ, the walking even as He walked (v. 6)? 'He that *followeth Me*,' said Christ, 'walketh not in darkness, but shall have the Light of Life' (John viii. 12). To *know* God and Jesus Christ *is* eternal life (John xvii. 3); these are our Lord's own words; but S. John says that the very test of knowing whether we know Jesus Christ is obedience to His law : 'By *this* we know that we have known Him, *if we keep His commandments*' (1 John ii. 3); from which it follows inevitably that obedience, or good works, is necessary to eternal life. Again : 'He that hath the Son hath life' (1 John v. 12); but to have the Son is to 'abide in Him,' and to abide in Him is to obey Him : 'He that keepeth His commandments abideth in Him, and He in him' (iii. 21). The same

truth is expressed in another form : 'He that abideth in charity abideth in God, and God in him' (1 John v. 16). This charity or love is so important that, according to S. Paul, 'all faith' is profitless without it. (1 Cor. xiii. 2). What, then, is this charity? '*This is the charity*' (love) '*of God, that we keep His commandments*' (1 John v. 3); '*He that hath My commandments and keepeth them,*' said our Lord, '*he it is that loveth Me*' (John xiv. 21).

Eternal life, then, is regarded as the harvest of a correspondent and previous sowing, according to S. Paul's words: 'What things a man shall sow, *those* also shall he reap;' 'He that soweth according to the Spirit shall reap life everlasting;' here, although God is undoubtedly the principal Sower, still man is distinctly said to be *also* (Gal. vi. 8) a sower; and since the reaper and sower are represented as one and the same person, the harvest of eternal life is a reward of the spiritual labours of man, and a reward which is as essentially dependent upon those labours, as a harvest upon seed and sowing. Therefore in the Gospels, Christ says, '*Behold, your reward is great in heaven*' (Luke vi. 23); and in the Apocalypse, '*Behold, I come quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to his works*' (xxii. 12).

It is almost superfluous to quote any passage from Scripture to show that the good works of justified Christians are really, and not by any legal fiction, holy and acceptable to God; for He could not possibly attribute eternal life as the fruit and reward of such works if they were unholy and offensive, or indifferent to Him. Such an idea is repugnant to the very notion of a just, true, and holy God. But as those who profess to follow the footsteps of the Reformers adopt, more or less, this

monstrous view, I will cite the following texts in refutation of the error. S. Paul would not pray unceasingly for an impossibility; yet he ceases not to pray that the Colossians 'may walk worthy of God: in all things *pleasing*, being fruitful in *every* good work' (Col. i. 10); also for the Philippians, that they may be 'sincere and *without offence* unto the day of Christ' (Phil. i. 10),—therefore, during their whole life. 'God,' he says, 'chose us in Christ that we should be holy and unspotted in His sight in charity' (Eph. i. 4); not 'holy and unspotted' in any metaphorical or non-natural sense, but 'in His sight.' The words 'holy and unspotted' mean a purification by obedience; for Christ gave Himself . . . that He might *cleanse to Himself* a people acceptable, a *pursuer of good works*' (Titus ii. 14). S. Peter would never counsel an impossibility to those whom he addresses as 'dearly beloved:' yet he says to them, 'Be *diligent*, that ye may be found undefiled and unspotted to Him in peace' (2 Pet. iii. 14); and what he means by these words is plain from his reminding them how they ought to live 'in holy conversation and godliness' (ver. 11).

The sanctity of Christ is set forth as an example for the imitation of Christians, but as His holiness is real, so must be that of the Christian, according to the measure of his grace and capacity, or there could be no true imitation. Christ also suffered for us, leaving *you* an example that you should follow His steps, '*Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth*' (1 Pet. ii. 22); . . . '*Who bore our sins in His body upon the tree, that we being dead to sins should live to justice*' (24). Living to God and to righteousness was to be the very result in us of the coming of Christ; it was promised by nothing less than a divine oath: 'The oath

which He swore to Abraham our father, that He would grant to us that . . . we may *serve* Him without fear, *in holiness and justice before Him all our days*' (Luke i. 73).

S. John manifestly means by 'justice' a real, interior, and not an imputed or outward holiness: 'Let no man deceive you'—for he anticipates that there will be deceptive teaching on this point—'he that *doth* justice is just, even as He is just' (1 John iii. 7); the reality of God's absolute holiness is asserted in order to establish the reality of man's derived holiness. The children of the devil are those who commit real sins, and they are distinguished from the children of God by that fact; therefore the children of God are those who do real acts of goodness: 'Whosoever is born of God committeth not sin;' and on the other hand, 'Whosoever is *not* just is not of God' (v. 9, 10). S. John declares also that the answer to prayer depends on our obedience to God: 'Whatsoever we shall ask we shall receive of Him, *because* we keep His commandments and do those things which are pleasing in His sight' (v. 22).

Holy Scripture, therefore, abundantly testifies to the truth of the following language of the Catholic Church about the sanctity and the meritorious nature of good works: 'To those who labour well even to the end, life eternal is to be proposed, both *as a grace* mercifully promised, through Christ Jesus, to the sons of God, and *as a reward* to be faithfully rendered to their good works and merits, according to the promise of God Himself' (Conc. Trid. sess. vi. cap. xvi.); and again, 'We are not only reputed, but are called and *are truly just*, receiving within ourselves justice, each one according to his own measure, which the Holy Spirit dispenses to individuals as He wills, according to both the

disposition and coöperation of each' (cap. vii.). 'As the justice,' writes S. Augustine, 'according to which the just man lives by faith, is given by God to man through the Spirit of Grace, it is true justice' (Cont. Ep. Pelag. ad Bonif. lib. iii. c. vii.).

## CHAPTER II.

### MERIT AND GRACE.

WHEN Scripture is so plain and explicit in confirmation of the Catholic doctrine, how does it happen that so many well-intentioned Protestants reject and condemn it as anti-scriptural? The reason is because they do not attend to the vital and immense distinction which the Catholic Church makes between the work of Christ in its bearing upon salvation and the works of man. 'The *meritorious cause* of our justification is our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, when we were yet enemies, on account of the exceeding charity, with which He loved us, merited justification and satisfied God the Father for us, by His most holy passion, on the wood of the Cross' (Conc. Trid. sess. vi. cap vii.).

Man could not possibly have any share whatever in a justification and satisfaction which required the infinite merits of an incarnate God. Neither can he, by anything which he possesses, merit that gift of divine grace, through whose supernatural aid alone he can participate in the effect of the merits of his Redeemer. The propitiation by Christ for sin is a free gift of the mercy of God, and so is the grace which enables each man to benefit individually by that mercy.



Christ indeed died for all men ; nevertheless not all receive the benefit of His death, but those alone to whom the merit of His passion is communicated : for as, in truth, men would not be born unholy (*injusti*) unless they were born by being propagated from the seed of Adam, since by that propagation, whilst they are conceived through him, they contract an unrighteousness which is their own (*proprium*) ; so, unless they were reborn in Christ, they would never be justified, since by that regeneration through the merits of His passion the grace is imparted to them by which they become righteous' (ibid. cap. iii.).

The Council then, after stating that this regeneration is by baptism or by the desire of baptism, by which man is translated from being a son of the first Adam 'into a state of grace and adoption of the sons of God, through the second Adam,' declares that 'in adults the beginning of their justification is to be derived from prevenient grace through Jesus Christ, that is, by the (His) calling by which they are called, *when they have no merits of their own* ; so that they who were alienated from God by their sins are disposed *through His exciting and assisting grace* to turn themselves to their own justification by freely assenting to, and coöperating with, that same grace ; so that through God touching the heart of man by the illumination of the Holy Spirit, man is not altogether inactive, since he receives that inspiration, *being able to reject it* ; and yet he would not be able without the grace of God to move himself to righteousness in His sight by his own will. Wherefore in the Sacred Writings, when it is said, 'Turn ye unto Me, and I will turn to you' (Zach. i. 4), we are admonished of our liberty. When we answer, 'Convert us, O Lord, to Thee, and we shall be converted' (Lament. v.

21), we confess that we have had 'prevenient grace' (cap. v.). Justification itself is described to be 'not only the remission of sins, but also the sanctification and renovation of the inward man through a voluntary reception of grace and gifts, whence a man becomes, from being unrighteous, righteous; from being an enemy, a friend [of God], in order that he may be an heir, according to hope, of eternal life.'

Five causes of justification are enumerated: (1) The final, which is the glory of God and Christ, and eternal life. (2) The efficient, which is God the merciful, Who gratuitously washes and sanctifies, signing and anointing with the Holy Spirit of promise. (3) Jesus Christ, 'Who when we were yet enemies,' &c. already quoted. (4) The instrumental, 'the Sacrament of Baptism, which is the Sacrament of Faith, without which it never happened to any man to be justified.' Lastly, (5). 'The one formal cause, which is the righteousness of God, not that by which *He Himself is righteous*, but that by which *He makes us righteous*; by which, that is to say, being endowed (*donati*) by Him, we are renewed in the spirit of our mind.' The Council further teaches that there is no justification, except by the communication of the merit of Christ's passion, and that this communication takes place 'in the justification of the wicked, whilst by the merits of the same most holy passion, the charity' (love) 'of God is poured forth in the hearts of those who are justified, and inheres in them; whence man, in the justification itself, together with the remission of sins, receives through Jesus Christ, into Whom he is engrafted, all these which are simultaneously infused into him—faith, hope, and charity.' Justification is affirmed to be by faith, 'because faith is the beginning of man's salvation, the foundation and root of all

justification. . . We are, moreover, said to be justified *gratis* because *none* of those things that precede justification, whether faith or works, merit the grace itself of justification' (cap. viii.). 'When God crowns our merits,' writes S. Augustine, 'He crowns His own gifts' (Ep. cxiv. c. v.).

No language could possibly express more clearly than the words of the Council of Trent the fundamental distinction between the merits of Christ as the cause of our salvation, and the absolute indebtedness of man to God for that free gift of His undeserved mercy.

'Are there no merits in the just? Certainly, *because* they are just. But they *had* no merits enabling them to *become just*' (August. Ep. cxiv. c. iii.). So little does the merit of the justified man clash with that of Christ, the Justifier of men, that no person *can* be justified at all if he does not first believe that Christ *alone* is the meritorious cause of his salvation; this is a necessary preliminary in the case of all, except infants, who are incapable of making a conscious act of faith. Without this faith, nothing else will avail to justification. The same doctrine was decreed by a Catholic Council held A.D. 529. 'A reward is due to good works, if they are done; but grace, which is *not due*, goes before them in *order that* they may be done' (II. Conc. Arausic. can. xviii.).

Those Protestants, therefore, who argue as if, according to the Catholic doctrine, man were considered to be the cause of his own salvation, *conjointly* with Christ, and *in the same sense in which Christ alone is the Saviour of man*, as explained by the Council of Trent, labour under a grievous error of fact which vitiates to the core all their reasoning upon that momentous subject.

As Protestants confuse the Catholic idea of the merits of Christ with the Catholic idea of the merits of man, so they fall into another mistake by confusing the works that are done by man *before* his justification with the works that are done by him when he is in a state of justification. They take no account of the vast difference in moral and spiritual value between the actions of a man who is not vitally united to Christ, and a man who is; and because they do not distinguish between these two *antagonistic* states, they fail to distinguish between the respective qualities of the actions performed by the soul in those different conditions. As there is no spiritual merit in works done without justifying grace, they deny that there is any in works done in and through justifying grace.

In order to secure, as they imagine, the exclusive glory of all merit to Christ, they erroneously and unjustly refuse to Him the glory of investing the living members of His own body with even a participated merit derived from His own strength.

As to works done by man separated from Christ, the Council of Trent distinctly says that, without the virtue which Christ 'pours into the justified,' no works '*could by any means be grateful to God, and meritorious*' (Sess. vi. 16). On the other hand, the justified are able to 'fully satisfy the divine law,' in the present life, by the merit of '*their works done in God,*' and to obtain life eternal, in due time, if they die in grace. Our righteousness, also, is called *our own*, 'not as if it came from ourselves; but it is our own, because we are justified through it inhering in us; and the same is God's [righteousness] because it is poured into us by God, through the merit of Christ.' How closely the merit of good works is connected with the indwelling of the spirit

of adoption in the justified is proved by the fact of the Church condemning a proposition of Baius, which affirmed that 'good works done by the children of adoption do not receive the character of merit, from being done through the spirit of adoption, but *only* because they are conformable to law, and obedience is rendered through them.'

The merit of Christ is absolute, perfect, superabundantly sufficient to satisfy, by its intrinsic excellence, the strictest justice of God, and necessarily antecedent to any possible merit of the human race: 'Without Me ye can do nothing.' The merit of man, on the contrary, even when justified, is wholly conditional, imperfect, and satisfactory to the divine justice in only a relative degree, according to His merciful acceptance of it through Christ; it follows, is dependent upon, and gratuitously derived from, Christ; and not only is the merit of Christ a free gift of God, but those internal and external means by which man is enabled to share in its blessings, namely, supernatural faith, love, and the sacraments, are all gifts of God, to which man has no claim except that which rests on the spontaneous promise of His Word. 'In this is charity, not as though we had loved God, but because He hath first loved us and sent His Son to be a propitiation for our sins' (1 John iv. 10). 'By grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, for it is the *gift* of God' (Eph. ii. 8). 'The charity of God is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, Who is *given* to us' (Rom. v. 5). 'The *grace* of God is life everlasting through Christ Jesus' (Rom. vi. 23). With regard to the necessity of grace for faith, the Council of Trent has anathematised 'any one who shall say that man can believe . . . *without the prevenient inspiration of the Holy Ghost and His aid*, in such a

way as it behoves, so that the grace of justification may be conferred upon him' (Sess. vi. can. iii.). Such is the Catholic doctrine with regard to the merit of Christ and the Christian, and those who know it cannot possibly confound the one with the other.

Besides the general broad misconceptions of Protestants about these two distinct kinds of merit, they also fall into error, and therefore into false inferences, through another inaccuracy in the idea which they attach to the Catholic term 'good works.' By 'works' they frequently mean something *entirely* external—acts of the body; whereas the Catholic means internal acts of the justified soul, such as acts of faith, hope, love, humility, adoration, and the like, as well as outward actions. The Catholic also, wherever he attributes goodness and merit to any outward action, *always* includes in his conception the *internal* motive, quality, and spirit, of which the outward act is the effect, embodiment, and manifestation, just as the spoken word is that clothing and actuation of the thought lying beneath it, by means of which it becomes a reality in the world of *outer* life.

Protestants, therefore, make a serious mistake when, in judging of Catholic doctrines, they neglect to do what every Catholic does, namely, distinguish between a 'work' considered exclusively in itself apart from the agent, like a picture viewed apart from the artist, and and the same work considered in its *totality* as a moral whole, and *inseparably* connected with its generating *internal* cause. The distinction between these two ideas of a good work is most important. To take an illustration: the value, for example, of the human body, regarded as a mere mass of flesh, is immensely different from the value of the same body regarded as vitalised

by the living soul, and the difference will be still greater if that living soul is through the Holy Ghost 'one spirit with the Lord' (1 Cor. vi. 17). It would be, therefore, a strange and gross confusion for any person to speak of these two views of the body as identical, and to attribute to the body, apart from the soul, the same excellence as he would attribute to it when under the elevating action of the soul. This, however, is the kind of confusion which is constantly made in regard to the moral or spiritual worth of the actions of Christians. The only thing that is taken into account is the merely human element, the form that meets the senses, the *event* of the action as another numerical fact in human life; and by this standard the moral value of the act is measured, and docketed accordingly. Such a mode of reasoning, however, is utterly fallacious, because it confounds that which is merely human with that which is partly human and partly divine; it splits into two elements an act which is indivisible in the soul of the agent, and treats that which is the *conjoint* work of God and man, of grace and nature, as if it were man's work *only*. Thus acts presenting a penitential appearance *may* be only corporal and mechanical; they *may* be even the deeds of a hypocrite; they *may* be easily done by a sinner who has no fellowship of peace with God, and is in fact an enemy of God: but, on the other hand, they may be the true signs of a 'faith working by love,' fruits of the Holy Ghost, the real outcome of God's working in the soul, 'to will and to accomplish according to His good will' (Phil. ii. 13), and of man's coöperation with God. In judging the last-mentioned actions, whether penitential or otherwise, they must be estimated in their *entirety*, and as they exist in the judgment of God; they must not be mentally sepa-

rated from Christ, their primary meritorious cause, and from the Holy Ghost, their first inspirer, their continuous preserver and protector, and then called human and therefore worthless, because they have a human soul and body for the medium and field of their operations. They are not wholly divine nor wholly human, but are partly divine and partly human, whilst both form together one moral unity, and have therefore been truly called *human-divine* actions: human, because they proceed from the activity of a human soul endowed with free-will, and are therefore capable of merit and demerit; divine, because that same soul is moved, although without violence or necessity, by the indwelling grace of God; is 'a partaker' therefore of 'the divine nature' (2 Pet. i. 4), and lives in Christ, for 'I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me' (Gal. ii. 20), says the Apostle. It is in consequence of this marvellous fellowship which exists through grace between the Christian and Christ that S. Paul calls his own sufferings the complement of the sufferings of Christ. 'I, Paul, . . . fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ, in my flesh, for His body's sake, which is the Church' (Col. i. 23, 24). The spiritual activity of the Apostle is so intimately interwoven with the activity of God Himself that the result is regarded as *one* operation: '*I labour, striving according to His working, which He worketh in me in power*' (Col. i. 29). '*Work out your salvation, for it is God Who worketh in you, to will and to accomplish according to His good will*' (Phil. ii. 12, 13). Thus, as S. Augustine beautifully observes, 'We claim from God the right of saying, Render to us that which Thou hast promised, because *we have done* that which Thou hast commanded; and *Thou hast done* this, inasmuch as Thou hast assisted those who



work' (Serm. clviii. al. xvi. De Verbis Apost. c. ii. n. 2). S. Leo expresses the same idea: 'God by loving us restores us to His own image, and in order that He may find in us the form of His own goodness He gives to us the means by which we may do what He does, lighting the lamps of our minds, and inflaming us with the fire of His charity, that we may not only love Himself, but also love what He loves' (Serm. i. De Jejun. Dec. Mensis).

The 'goodness' of Jesus Christ, says the Council of Trent, is so great 'towards all men that He wills His own gifts to be their merits. As the vine pours [sap] into its branches, so He pours forth virtue continuously into the justified; which virtue always goes before, accompanies, and follows their good works, and *without which they can in no wise be pleasing to God and meritorious*' (Sess. vi. c. xvi.).

So really and deeply is the justifying grace of God an indwelling habit of the soul, that S. Paul does not hesitate to speak as if we ourselves and its effect in us were one and the same thing: Christ was made a sin-offering for us 'that *we* might be made *the justice of God* in Him' (2 Cor. v. 21). The sanctification of man is called the '*justice of God*,' as S. Augustine says, in the same sense as faith in Christ is called the *faith of Christ*, and as the love which is poured into our hearts by God is called the '*charity of God*' (Rom. v. 5); in like manner, that justice by which we are made just through His gift is called the justice of God' (De Spir. et Litt. c. xxxii. n. 56). What can be more significant than the following expressions? The '*renovation* of the Holy Ghost, Whom He hath poured forth upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour' (Titus iii. 5, 6); '*the new creature* in Christ' (Gal. vi. 15); '*putting on the new man* created in justice'

(Eph. iv. 24); 'growing up in Christ' (ver. 15); being 'born of God,' and having '*the seed of God abiding in him*' (1 John iii. 9): also, how striking is the declaration of Christ Himself with regard to the new birth in the Spirit! 'That which is born of the Spirit is spirit,' as truly as 'that which is born of the flesh is flesh' (John iii. 6). Nor is it merely said that a spiritual process takes place *in* man, but *man himself* is affirmed to be re-born: 'Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. . . . *You must be born again*' (ver. 5, 7). When, moreover, it is remembered that this regeneration means being 'quickened together in Christ' by God, that we are called 'God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus in good works, which God hath prepared that we should walk in them' (Eph. ii. 5, 10); and that Christ said of the man who should love Him, 'My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and *make Our abode with him*' (John xiv. 23), we shall have some idea both of the sublimely intimate union that grace can effect between mortal men and God, and of the nature and excellence of the actions which can proceed from that union, as its fruit.

Thus the Christian is not merely passive, as if God alone worked in his soul, nor does the Christian work alone as if God were passive; but he is able to work together with God and through the assistance given by God. 'Every man shall receive his own reward according to *his own labour*, for we are God's *coadjutors*' (1 Cor. iii. 8, 9). On account of this interior union between God and man, the same effect which is at one time attributed to God is at another time attributed to man; just as (if such an analogy be permissible) the actions which are referred to the Godhead in Christ are

also referred to the manhood. For example, it is said that Christ came to '*cleanse to Himself* a people acceptable, a pursuer of good works' (Titus ii. 13); and yet the same Apostle writes, 'Dearly beloved, let us *cleanse ourselves* from all defilement of the flesh and of the spirit, *perfecting sanctification* in the fear of God' (2 Cor. vii. 1). Christ is said to have reconciled us 'in the body of His flesh, through death,' in order to present us 'holy, unspotted, and blameless before Him' (Coloss. i. 22); and yet S. Peter says, 'Be *diligent*, that ye may be found undefiled and unspotted to Him in peace' (2 Pet. iii. 14). 'He who hath begun a good work in you will perfect it unto the day of Jesus Christ' (Phil. i. 6). Here every stage of the good work is assigned to God, as if man were excluded, and yet it is the same Apostle who exhorts believers in God to '*be careful to excel* in good works' (Titus iii. 8); and S. Peter bids those who 'suffer according to the will of God to commend their souls in good deeds to the faithful Creator' (1 Pet. iv. 19). Not to multiply further quotations, it is worthy of notice that language of a similar kind is used in the Old Testament. God is represented in Ezekiel as saying, '*I will give you a new heart, and put a new spirit within you*' (xxxvi. 26); and also as saying to Israel, '*Make to yourselves a new heart and a new spirit*' (xviii. 31). 'Conduct me, O Lord, in Thy justice, . . . direct my way in Thy sight,' is David's prayer (Ps. v. 9); whilst Jeremias says, 'Direct thy heart into the right way wherein thou hast walked' (xxxi. 21). 'Wash me yet more from my iniquity, . . . O God,' exclaims the Psalmist (l. 4); whilst God Himself, speaking through His prophet Isaias, says, '*Wash yourselves, and be clean; take away the evil of your devices from Mine eyes*' (i. 16).

The fellowship of the justified soul with God is so stupendous in its nature and results that the Fathers have not hesitated to speak of it as a kind of deification ; drawing their doctrine from a profound study of the language of the Holy Scriptures, which teaches plainly that we are made by grace not recipients merely of the gifts of the Holy Ghost, acting on us from without, as the extrinsic cause of our sanctification, but that we are really united to the very *Person* of the Holy Ghost. This union, it is scarcely necessary to say, produces no change on the part of God, but only on the part of the creature, who is placed by the gift of grace in a specially intimate and favourable relationship to God, such as did not and could not exist before the act of justification. God is *present*, in one sense, to every creature, by virtue of His immensity; to the bad, therefore, as well as to the good. But God is present in the justified by another mode: He *dwells* in them through His Spirit.

This presence is 'by a new title and a moral exigency, which requires that God should be present according to His essence, not as being *immense*, but as *One Who loves and is loved*; as *One communicating Himself in order to be enjoyed*. It is therefore a new mode of inexistence, according to power and operation of spiritual effects; and a new mode, according to *presence*, by the guardianship and supernatural providence of a Father towards an adopted son' (Franzelin. *De Deo Trin. secundum Personas*, p. 572). The effect of such a divine presence is to entitle those who possess it to be called, by analogy, gods. Thus S. Basil, in allusion to the words of the Psalmist (lxxxi. 6), quoted by our Lord (John x. 34), 'I have said you are gods, and all of you the sons of the Most High,' writes as follows: 'The

Holy Ghost has given Himself to the multitude of the just; and every substance of the just, both great and small, both angels and archangels, has been sanctified, and through Him each one of the saints is a god; for it has been said to them by God, "I have said you are gods." . . That Spirit, therefore, must be divine, and of God Who causes the gods to *be* gods. The Spirit has both life itself in Himself, and those who participate in Him live divinely, having a divine and celestial life' (Cont. Eunom. l. v.). 'As the power of seeing is in a sound eye, so is the operation of the Spirit in a clean soul; . . whilst the Spirit dwells in those who are worthy and *effects there His own works* He is truly said to be in them who are capable of having the Spirit' (De Spir. Sancto, xxvi. c. 61-63.)

S. Cyril speaks of the Holy Ghost being *personally* in the soul, as a seal which impresses upon it a likeness to God, and produces that similitude not, as it were, by a mere ministerial agency, but by a participation of Himself communicated to the soul: 'We are called gods, inasmuch as we are participators of the divine and ineffable nature, through conjunction with the Holy Spirit' (Dial. vii.).

S. Athanasius thus writes: 'Since the Holy Spirit is within us, that Word also Who gives Him to us is within us, and the Father is within the Word; hence that saying, "I and the Father will come, and We will make Our abode with Him"' (Ad Serap. Ep. i. n. 30).

So deeply were the Fathers penetrated with this sublime doctrine of the substantial presence of the Holy Ghost in the souls of the justified, that they frequently used the fact as an argument against those who denied the divinity of Christ or of the Holy Ghost. 'How is

He' (Christ) 'not God Who gives the Holy Ghost? Nay, how great a God is He Who gives God!' (Augustinus, *De Trinit.* l. xv. 20.) So with regard to the divinity of the Holy Ghost. S. Cyril of Alexandria thus reasons: 'Can any created nature make into gods those who were not gods before? This is possible to God alone, Who sends into the souls of the just a participation of His own nature, through the Spirit, by Whom we, having been made conformable in nature to the Son, have, like Him, been called gods, and the sons of God. For, to make us sons of God, God sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba, Father." Therefore, since He can deificate us by His own power, this must be a greater and more excellent thing than lies within the capacity of any creature' (*Dial.* vii.). This union between man and God is so real and also so supernatural that S. Cyril and others deemed it even necessary to guard against the possibility of a confusion of thought between it and the union of the two natures in Christ. 'The Word of God,' says S. Cyril, 'was made flesh, but He was not in man as He is in the saints; in whom He dwells by a kind of participation which is effected through the Holy Spirit' (*Dial.* i. *De Trin.*). 'So also,' S. Augustine observes, 'it does not follow that because men are the sons of God, through the grace of adoption, therefore each one of these is the only begotten' (In *Psal.* lxxvii.). 'Christ,' says S. Fulgentius, 'received in His soul the *whole* fulness of the Spirit; for this is given, where the Spirit is given without measure. We, however, have not received the whole fulness, but *of* His fulness, grace for grace' (*Respons. ad Tert. Quæst. Ferrandi*).

It may be laid down, therefore, as the doctrine of Scripture and the general teaching of the ancient

Fathers that the Holy Ghost has been given to us by Christ not only in the supernatural effects of His divine activity, but really, substantially, and personally; so that, in the words of S. Augustine, 'He does not dwell in us merely by the grace of visitation and operation, but by the very presence of Majesty' (Serm. i. In Fer. Pent.).

Those who believe this doctrine will understand at once how lofty must be the state of a justified soul. They will appreciate the force of the words of S. Thomas Aquinas, when he says that 'the gift of grace surpasses all the faculties of created nature, since it is nothing else than a certain participation of the divine nature, which exceeds every other nature' (Summa, i. ii. 112, ar. 1). They will not be startled by such expressions as 'deification,' since no other analogous term can so truly convey the idea of the elevation of man through Christ into that fellowship with God which Christ Himself compares to the unity of the Trinity (John xvii. 21); whilst those, on the other hand, whose theology takes a shallower and more human view of the power of spiritual life, will naturally reject much in the Catholic creed which they ought to embrace.

Since, then, the Holy Scriptures abound in overwhelming proofs of the joint operation of the grace of God with the free-will of man—since such transcendental qualities are attributed to the deeds of the soul that is engrafted by grace into Christ Jesus, and such high rewards are promised to its labours—it would have seemed incredible, if the fact did not exist, that any persons who believe in the written revelation of God should deny the value of 'good works,' and base upon that denial their deeply erroneous opposition to the teaching of the entire Catholic Church, in all the ages of her history,

upon such momentous questions as salvation by Christ, grace, merit, penance in this life, and purgatory in the next.

The well-known saying, 'O Liberty, what crimes have not been committed in thy name!' may be not inappropriately adapted to this strange perversion of Holy Writ: 'O Scripture, what errors are not, and have not been, taught in thy name!'





**S. BONAVENTURA AND THE PSALTER  
OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN.**



## § 1.

THE Psalter of the Blessed Virgin, attributed to S. Bonaventura, has been frequently brought forward as an overwhelming charge against Catholics. It is one of those favourite polemical guns which are always kept in stock in the Protestant magazines, ready to be discharged, with ostentatious confidence of the result, against Catholics, although the majority have probably heard of the existence of the work for the first time when they were made acquainted with the fact by hostile and professional assailants of their religion.

In order to estimate rightly the worth of the accusations made against the saint, it will be useful to mention, as a preliminary to an examination of the Psalter, some leading facts in his life. From them even persons who are not Catholics will be able to form an opinion whether he was likely to be wanting in reverence for the Psalms of David or any other portion of Scripture, or to be so ignorant, or superstitious, or impious as to give to the Blessed Virgin that adoration which is exclusively due to Almighty God.

S. Bonaventura was born in the year 1221, at Bagnoria in Tuscany, and died at Lyons in 1274, during the session of the fourteenth Œcumenical Council, and second of Lyons, that was convened by Pope Gregory X. for the reunion of the Greeks and Latins. It is interesting to remember that it was from Haymo, an Englishman, he received the religious habit of the Order of St. Francis, and that he was nominated by

Clement IV., in 1265, Archbishop of York, and only by urgent entreaty and tears obtained permission to be relieved of that high dignity. It was also under the renowned Englishman, Alexander Hales, born at Hales in Gloucester, and called the 'Irrefragable Doctor,' that S. Bonaventura completed his studies from 1242 to 1245 at Paris. He became General of his Order in 1257, and Cardinal Bishop of Albano in 1273. He was canonised in 1482 by Sixtus IV., and proclaimed Doctor of the universal Church by Sixtus V. in 1587. His shrine at Lyons was plundered by the Calvinists in 1562, who, after murdering the guardian and a Catholic captain whom they seized, burned the saint's relics, scattering the ashes into the Saone, and also destroying by fire the convent with its archives.

S. Bonaventura was eminently distinguished, not only for his great learning and philosophical depth and earnestness, but especially for that spirit of heavenly love which pervaded all his writings. For this reason he was called the 'Seraphic Doctor.' 'He singularly excelled,' says Sixtus V., 'not only in subtlety of argumentation, facility of teaching, skill in defining, but in a certain divine power of moving the minds of men' (*Bulla Triumphantis*). The celebrated Chancellor of Paris, Gerson, spoke of him always with enthusiastic admiration, declaring that whilst many could write books of learning and many others books of piety, S. Bonaventura surpassed them by doing both: 'He inflames the affections, instructs the understanding, and brings them back and unites them to God' (*Epist. ad Minoritam*). 'He so wrote of holy things that the Holy Spirit appeared to speak in him' (Sixtus IV. *Bulla Superna*). His death was publicly declared by Pope Gregory X., in an address to the whole Council of Lyons, to be 'an immeasurable

loss to the Church.' The writings attributed to him amount to a large number: about 160 of which probably are genuine.

What his reverence and love of the Holy Scriptures were, may be known from the following facts: His works began to be published at Rome, by order of Sixtus V., in 1588, and the edition was completed in 1599. It comprises seven folio volumes, two of which consist of commentaries on Scripture. He was not only a constant reader of the sacred volume, but he wrote out the entire Bible twice. Of these copies, written by his own hand, one was at Bagnoria, his native place, and the other at the Borromean Library in Milan, in the time of Luke Wadding (seventeenth century), the Annalist of the Friars Minor (Annal. t. iii. p. 87, n. 13). He is also said to have learned the whole Bible by heart; by which we may understand that there was no portion which he did not at some time or other commit to memory, though he might not *know* the whole by heart at any given moment. The same fact is related also of S. Thomas Aquinas (Vaughan's S. Thomas, vol. ii. p. 600, note).

Besides his commentaries upon specific portions of the Scriptures, *the Psalms* included, he also wrote several treatises on the best mode of studying them, and on their matter, dignity, and excellence. He gives four important rules for understanding their true meaning: humility, purity of heart, faithfulness, and studiousness (Brevil. proöem, s. 5). He also lays much stress on the necessity of praying to Jesus Christ, even with tears and groanings, to obtain interior light. His own writings are studded throughout with quotations, topics, and illustrations drawn from the same source. He compares Scripture to that royal river which runs through Paradise, with

its four branches symbolical of the four senses, the literal, the allegorical, the anagogical (which raises the soul to hope), and the tropological, which incites the soul to work through love (In Hexam. Ser. xiv. 13). What can be a more sublime idea of the Holy Scriptures than that which S. Bonaventura expresses when he calls the science of Scripture 'a divine science, in which all human sciences are harmonised and purified from defects; a science which had its origin and institution from the Uncreated Word, was recited by the Inspired Word, completed by the Incarnated Word, and promulgated by the Authenticated Word; so that the Word of God may be called the Word of the Incarnated God, the Word of Truth and Wisdom, the Word of Excellence and Power, the Word of Life, and the Word of Grace'! (Princip. S. Script.) These are the words of the saint whom reckless, ignorant, and prejudiced controversialists accuse of being not only capable, but actually guilty, of blasphemous parodies of the Inspired Word!

His devotion to our Blessed Lord may be surmised from his reply to S. Thomas Aquinas, the Angelic Doctor, who asked him from what books he had obtained his knowledge: the saint, pointing to a crucifix, said, 'This is the source of all my knowledge: I study only Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.' Sixtus V. declared in the Bulla *Triumphantis* that S. Bonaventura was so inebriated with the love of his God, that 'he seemed to behold the crucified Jesus everywhere, and to dwell within His wounds;' he also calls him 'a golden vessel fashioned in every part by the Holy Spirit.'

Among the exquisite prayers which the Church proposes for recitation to her priests as an act of thanksgiving after Mass, there is one by S. Bonaventura, of which the following are the concluding words: 'May my heart

ever follow after Thee, O most sweet Lord Jesus, seek Thee, find Thee again, aspire to Thee, arrive at Thee, meditate on Thee, speak of Thee, and do everything to the praise and glory of Thy name, with humility and discretion, with love and delight, with ease and affection, with perseverance even to the end; so that Thou alone mayest ever be my hope, all my confidence, my riches, my pleasure, my spirits, my joy, my rest and tranquillity, my peace, my sweetness, my fragrance, my darling delight, my refreshment, my refuge, my help, my wisdom, my portion, my possession, my treasure: fixed in which may my mind and my heart be firm and ever immovably rooted.' Is there anything comparable to this exultant torrent of love towards Jesus Christ to be found in the devotional writings of any of those Protestant religious authors, who so boldly declare that the Catholic faith dwarfs and stifles the love of Christ in the souls of its members? Yet this is the spontaneous language of a monk and mariolater in the dark ages of the thirteenth century!

To Brother Giles, the third companion of S. Francis of Assisi, S. Bonaventura said, 'If God were to bestow on any one no other talent than the grace of loving Him, this alone is enough and is every spiritual treasure;' and also, 'A poor old woman may love God more than the most learned master and doctor in theology.' The love of God, the joys of heaven, and the life and sufferings of Jesus Christ, form the staple subjects of his devotional works. That he had a great affection towards everything that bore upon the ineffable mystery of the Incarnation, and therefore, by a necessary consequence, had, as a Catholic saint, a special delight in expatiating on topics connected with the Mother of the Incarnate Word, is certain. But that he ever wrote a syllable in which



his fancy or his fervour infringed on the adoration due to God alone is a calumny without an atom of foundation. But the Psalter! The Psalter not only does not indicate such an offensive absurdity, but no one can possibly read it through without meeting, again and again, with passages that are utterly incompatible with the Protestant theory that S. Bonaventura places a creature, however exalted, on an equality with the Creator.

There are two Psalters of S. Bonaventura: (1) the Little Psalter of the B. Virgin, which is very short and in verse; and (2) the Large Psalter, which is the especial object of attack.

What, then, is the nature of this work—what are its constituent elements? It consists of 150 psalms, corresponding so far with the number of the Psalms of David. There are usually not more than five or six verses in each psalm, except the 118th (119th, Prot. version), which is divided into eleven parts, of five verses in each. Besides the psalms, there are included under the same title of Psalter eight canticles, '*in imitation of*' (*ad instar*) that in Isaias (xii. cap.); that of Ezechias (Isaias xxxviii. 10); that of Anna (1 Kings ii. al. 1 Samuel ii. Prot. version); two of Moses (Exod. xv. and Deut. xxxii.); that of Habacuc (iii); that of the three children (Daniel iii. 52), and that of Zachary (Luke i. 68). After the above canticles follows a hymn, 'like that ascribed to SS. Ambrose and Augustine' (*Te Deum laudamus*); and a 'creed like that of Athanasius;' the whole ending with a Litany of the B.V.M.

To describe the Psalter, as Protestant\* controver-

\* 'I find in an *authorised Psalter* of your Church the name of God *struck out of every Psalm*, and out of the "*Te Deum*," and the name of our Lady adored instead' (Dr. Cumming's Letter to Monsignor Patterson, Sept. 29, 1874).

sialists do, as a perversion of the *Psalms* of David, is to represent it in a totally false aspect. It is not even a paraphrase, except to a most limited degree; for as a general rule S. Bonaventura takes the first verse only of each psalm, which he uses as a kind of starting-point, and key-note to the rest. The *Psalms* of David have simply supplied him with the idea and the models. In order to give my readers a specimen, I will quote the eighth psalm in the *Psalter*, which they can compare with the eighth (ninth, Prot. version) of David. Here not even the first verses in each correspond with one another.

‘PSALTER OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

O Lady, the Lord our God has been made our brother and our Saviour.

As fire in the bush and dew in the fleece, the Eternal Word of God has descended into thee.

The Holy Ghost making thee fruitful, the power of the Most High has overshadowed thee.

Blessed be thy most pure conception, blessed be the bringing forth of the Virgin!

Blessed be the purity of thy flesh, blessed be the sweetness of the mercy of thy heart!

Glory be to the Father, &c.’

‘PSALM OF DAVID.

O Lord our God, how admirable is Thy name in all the earth!

For Thy magnificence is elevated above the heavens.

Out of the mouth of infants and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise.

Because of Thy enemies, that Thou mayst destroy the enemy and the avenger.

For I will behold Thy heavens, the works of Thy fingers; the moon and stars which Thou hast founded.

What is man that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that Thou visitest him? &c.

The last verse of the third psalm of the *Psalter* is only one specimen out of many others of the auxiliary and subordinate, though exalted, position ascribed by S.

Bonaventura to the B. Virgin, in relation to God : 'Lead me to the haven of salvation, and restore my spirit to my Maker and Creator.' No one who thus regards the B. Virgin as a valuable help *towards* the attainment of eternal bliss, and of final union with his 'Maker and Creator,' could possibly be supposed to forget the infinite distinction between the creature and God. The similitude of a guide or pilot and the port which is the object of desire is a decisive illustration of the point in question. The redemption by Christ is proclaimed with undeniable clearness in the hymn written in honour of the B. Virgin, in imitation of the *Te Deum* : 'We therefore beg thee to help us, who have been redeemed by the precious death of thy Son.'

Out of the twenty verses which constitute the imitation of the Athanasian Creed, only the first three refer directly to the B. Virgin herself, all the remainder being applied to Jesus Christ. The beginning of this second part is rather quaint :

'May the Jew be confounded and blush who says that Christ was born of the seed of Joseph.

May the Manichean be confounded who says that Christ had a fictitious body.'

Then, after describing our Lord, as being 'in the heavens without a mother, on the earth without a father,' the Creed concludes with these lines—

'Having been adored with gifts by the Magi, put to flight by Herod, baptised in the Jordan by John,  
Betrayed, seized, scourged, crucified, dead and buried,  
He rose again with glory, ascended into the heavens,  
Sent down the Holy Spirit on His disciples, and His Mother  
Whom at length He Himself took up into heaven ;  
And she sits at her Son's right hand,  
Not ceasing to implore her Son in our behalf.'

## § 2.

Protestant controversialists affirm that it is the height of presumption—to use the milder form of their charges—to apply to the B. Virgin language of Scripture which is descriptive of the special prerogatives of God and of His Eternal Son ; thus exalting her, as they declare, to an equality with the Persons of the Holy Trinity.

I answer in reply that there would be undoubtedly presumption under the following circumstances. If these particular words were so exclusively appropriated to God that they could never be used in another and secondary sense, as applicable to creatures ; but neither the Latin language in which S. Bonaventura's Psalter was written, nor the Italian, nor the English, to omit many others, has any such specially technical phraseology. The strongest word of a religious signification, referable to the worship due to God, in the English language is *adore* ; but it would be superfluous to give illustrations, familiar even to children, of the adaptation of this term to creatures.

There is not a single word or phrase throughout S. Bonaventura's Psalter which is incapable, by any laws of grammar or custom, of being applied to a being inferior to God. If Protestants complain of the occasionally ambiguous language of Catholic writers, they have an easy and simple safeguard.

When the same words are used to express different objects, the different *nature* of the respective objects must determine the *sense* of the words : it is this universally admitted principle of interpretation to which Catholics appeal, often in vain, when the same language is sometimes used in reference to God and creatures ; yet, if any authority were wanted for this action, Scripture will afford abundant confirmation of its lawfulness.

In the 1 Paral. xxix. 20 (1 Chron. Prot. vers.) the inspired writer says that the assembly 'bowed themselves and worshipped God, and then *the king*.' Here the same external gesture and the same word are applied to the reverence done, with scarcely a moment's interval of time, to the Almighty and to His servant David. Joshua worshipped the angel who was 'prince of the host of the Lord' (Jos. v. 15); and even when the angel in the Apocalypse told S. John to 'worship God,' the Greek word signifying there *divine* adoration is the same which is used in the Septuagint for the honour offered to angels, and not declined by them. Lot 'worshipped' the two angels who came to Sodom (Gen. xix. 1), and Balaam 'worshipped' the angel 'standing in the way' (Numb. xxii. 31). So the Hebrew term *Aleim* is applicable 'to denote both celestial and terrestrial authorities, and in signification extends to God, angels, and magistrates.' And the Septuagint writers constantly translate the incommunicable 'name *Jehovah* by a title of civil dignity and authority, *Κυρίος* or Lord, in which rendering they have been followed by the inspired writers of the New Testament' (Elmlicht's *Theophania*, p. 169, note m). The expression 'principalities and powers' is used in the New Testament to denote civil judges (Luke xii. 11), evil spirits (Eph. vi. 12, Col. ii. 15), and also good angels (Eph. i. 21). These instances, which might be easily multiplied, are useful as reminding our theological opponents that it is unbiblical, as well as unjust, to interpret language without reference to the particular object for which it is intended by the user himself to be applied.

To return, however, from this slight digression, to the Psalter of S. Bonaventura.

Another instance where presumption might be charge-

able against an author would be in a case where the writer gave no indication that he was quoting the words of Scripture in a sense different from that intended by the inspired writer. This cannot be said of S. Bonaventura, because the most cursory comparison of the Psalter of the B. Virgin with the Psalter of David shows at a glance that there are numerous, great, and palpable differences between the two: not only are the names of the Psalters, the arrangement, and the topics different to a remarkable extent, but S. Bonaventura tells those for whom he has composed it that his object is to incite them to increased love and praise of the B. Virgin and of 'the most glorious Fruit of her womb.' He states expressly in a few simple words of preface, which no Protestant controversialist has hitherto thought it prudent or just to quote, that he intends the Psalter merely as a slight token of his affection to the B. Virgin and his own friends. With a kind of playful humility, he says, 'I send it to you as a spark thrown off from my small wits' (*ex scintillulâ meâ pauculæ intelligentiæ*); again, too, he addresses his reader as one most dear (*charissime*), and calls his composition 'this wee little gift of mine' (*hoc tantillum meum munusculum*). The Psalter is evidently one of those spontaneous effusions of a heart overflowing with innocent joy, which happen to have been preserved to posterity whilst others have been lost; it is a pious *jeu d'esprit*, written for his own recreation and that of his friends. The very idea and form of it show how deeply the spirit of the royal Psalmist had possessed his whole mind and memory like an all-pervading fragrance; the inspired language had become to him as a familiar native tongue in which he loved to speak upon any theme that related to God, to Christ, and the Mother of his Saviour.

What can be a more gross distortion of the truth than to stigmatise this Psalter as a blasphemous parody of Scripture, and a perversion of the Psalms of David from the worship of God to the worship of the B. Virgin?

There are some persons who, without adopting the above extreme language, yet strongly condemn the Psalter on the general ground that it is perilous and unjustifiable to apply to the B. Virgin language that has been once used in Scripture with reference to God. But to whom can the Psalter be perilous? It was written in the thirteenth century for Catholics who could not have even imagined the meaning of the Protestant objection, namely, that those who read it might confound the B. Virgin with God. It is precisely the same with regard to Catholics of the nineteenth century: they meet the Protestant charge with argument, because that charge is frequently made, and they are anxious to explain and convert; but as a serious objection it is unintelligible to the Catholic intellect and conscience; it seems as irrational as to speak of the peril of confounding light with darkness, or any other two incompatible ideas. Is the Psalter perilous to Protestants, as being calculated to obscure in *their* minds the distinction between the attributes of the finite and the Infinite; or as being liable to ensnare them into a condemnation of Catholics which Catholics repudiate as false and unjust? Protestants can only fall into such errors either through culpable ignorance of the Catholic doctrine about the distinction between God and creatures, or by refusing to believe in the Catholic explanation of certain language which is applied to the B. Virgin, and seems to Protestants both untrue and unlawful.

What right, moreover, have they to sit in cynical judg-

ment upon language that was never intended for them, and which presupposes a whole system of belief which, however true, is foreign to their own views? Is there any body of men having their own principles, customs, and laws that would not, indignantly even, refuse to be weighed and measured by the arbitrary scale of utter strangers? Why are Catholics to be the only religious society in the world from whom their avowed enemies arrogantly demand, as a right, that they should never speak, write, or even pray, except in such terms that it is impossible for them to be misunderstood by the most ignorant, prejudiced, suspicious, and hostile critics that all the various conflicting sects of Christendom choose to claim as their legitimate offspring and representatives?

### § 3.

The objection against the adaptation of any scriptural passages to the B. Virgin resolves itself into this one radical question: Whether it is allowable to *apply* Sacred Scripture in the Old or New Testament to *any subject* not directly intended by the inspired writers. As this principle has been, from the earliest ages of Christianity, acted upon by the Fathers and various biblical expositors and divines in all ages; as the Reformers were famous for it at the beginning of the schism in the sixteenth century, and the Puritans later on; and as all preachers in every school of religious opinion in this country, whether High-Anglican, Evangelical, Broad, or Ultra-Ritualistic, as well as those amongst the Wesleyans, Baptists, Quakers, Irvingites, Swedenborgians, and countless other denominations, act, without a protest, upon the same prin-



ciple, I do not think it necessary to argue upon a point so universally conceded. If S. Bonaventura chose to adapt scriptural phraseology to an object doctrinally true, and devotionally useful to the soul—facts which I am not now proving, but take for granted as a Catholic—I am not aware of any natural law or principle, nor of any revealed law or principle, in either the Old or New Testament, by which such a mode of illustration is forbidden. If there be, let the proof be produced. S. Bonaventura's particular method as used in his Psalter is a question rather of literary taste and propriety than of theology; a question in which his sanctity, his philosophical, theological, and biblical skill, as well as the habits of a mediæval age, ought to weigh decisively in his favour against all opponents.

The same principle by which he is vindicated in his use of the Psalms of David will *à fortiori* vindicate him in his imitation of the 'Te Deum' and 'Athanasian Creed.'

In any case, more than enough has been said to show that it is a ridiculous exaggeration for Protestant controversialists to appeal to the Psalter—this 'wee little gift,' this 'tiny spark' of a holy wit, offered by S. Bonaventura to his personal friends—as an authoritative document proposed for the use of her children by the Catholic Church. If it be so, it is singular that so many millions of Catholics should have lived and died throughout many generations without having even heard of its existence. The chief missionaries of the Psalter are the professional Protestant disputants of this country.

The Pontifical Act by which S. Bonaventura was canonised, and that by which, later on, he was elevated to the rare dignity of Doctor of the universal Church,

did not raise this or any individual treatise amongst his various works into the category of an official expression of the Church in her entire corporate capacity. For although all the works of a saint are most rigorously examined, especially in regard to the doctorate when that privilege is conferred, the approval of his writings does not involve more than the declaration that there is nothing in his works which, if justly interpreted, is open to censure as being contrary or injurious to faith and morals. In cases where the Church has not published her own decision, it is allowable for theologians in any age to discuss, and differ from, the private opinions of even canonised Doctors, so long as they show that respect which is justly due to their merits and position in the Church; and, of course, the liberty of dissent is unlimited in the range of what comes under the head of mere literature, whether devotional or secular.

I have so far argued in justification of the *Psalter* of S. Bonaventura on the broad and admitted principle of the right of scriptural adaptation in general, which I have explained. But if I had chosen, I might have waived the discussion altogether upon a sufficient and definite ground, one about which, however, Protestant assailants are discreetly reticent. There is considerable doubt amongst critics as to the genuineness of the *Psalter* of the B. Virgin as a work of S. Bonaventura. It is contained in the original printed edition of his works, completed at Rome under Clement VIII. in 1599; but, as might be expected, a first edition of the works of an author who had been dead more than three hundred years could not be expected to be free from errors of various kinds, although the editors were not wanting in the art of criticism, considering the time in

which they lived. That there was considerable doubt about the question as to what was genuine or spurious in the first edition is evident from the fact that, in 1751, the fourth edition of S. Bonaventura's works was published in Venice, and a dissertation called *Diatriba Historico-chronologico-critica* was appended to a life of the saint, which was at the beginning of the edition; the number of volumes was thirteen in quarto, and out of the thirteen five only were, rightly or wrongly, assigned in the *Diatriba* as certainly genuine, the rest being described as either doubtful or spurious. A recent interesting and valuable treatise, by the Rev. F. Fidelis a Fanna, entitled 'Reasons for a New Collection of the Works of S. Bonaventura' (*Ratio Novæ Collectionis Operum Omnium sive Editorum sive Anecdorum, Seraph. Eccl. Doct. S. Bonaventuræ*), to which I am indebted for the above fact, gives a tabulated form of the works of the saint, classified according to their supposed degrees of genuineness, as represented by four important editors or critics subsequently to the edition first published at Rome. In three of these lists the greater Psalter of the B. Virgin, the one in question, is catalogued as *spurious*, and in the fourth, the *Prodromus ad Omnia Opera S. Bonav.* by F. Bonelli, it is described as *doubtful*. Alban Butler, in a note to his life of S. Bonaventura, gives it as his opinion that this Psalter is falsely attributed to that saint, and cites in confirmation Fabricius, in *Biblioth. Med. æt.*; Bellarmine and also Labbe, *De Script. Eccles.*; and Natalis Alexander, *Hist. Eccl. sæc. 13*. These authors, however, are quite silent on the point; so that Alban Butler must not, in this instance at least, have tested his authorities by personal verification.

Father Anton-Maria da Vicenza has lately pub-

lished a new life of S. Bonaventura, in honour of the sixth centenary of the saint, and he also places the Psalter in the catalogue of those works 'about which critics are still in doubt whether they are genuine or not' (*Vita di S. Bonaventura*, p. 192); but he adds, in a note, that Professor Bartolomeo Veratti has lately undertaken to prove, by solid criticism, that the Psalter is really the true offspring of the mind of the Seraphic Doctor. This treatise is entitled *Del Salterio Mariano, e di alcune altre Opere di S. Bonaventura*, Modena, 1874.

Whether the work belongs to S. Bonaventura or not is chiefly a matter of interest from a literary point of view. I, for my part, prefer to assume that it is genuine rather than, for the sake of a polemical convenience, to disown it, as if it contained anything that could not be justly defended upon the above-mentioned grounds.



# REPLY TO 'A PROTESTANT.'

## PART I.

SCRIPTURE AND THE CREED OF PIUS IV.

READING OF THE SCRIPTURES.

THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

THE LANGUAGE OF THE MASS.

## PART II.

TRANSUBSTANTIATION AND THE SCRIPTURES : BELLAR-  
MINE—FISHER—SCOTUS.

TRANSUBSTANTIATION AND THE CATECHISM OF THE  
COUNCIL OF TRENT.

ABSOLUTION AND CONTRITION.

THE ROMAN FORM OF ABSOLUTION.

## REPLIES TO 'A PROTESTANT' AND 'CLERICUS.'

THESE two articles arose out of the following circumstances: The Author delivered in Cornwall last year (1874) a Course of Doctrinal Lectures, an abridged report of which appeared in two of the local papers. Amongst the anonymous correspondents who attacked them were 'A Protestant' and 'Clericus.' The Author answered them; but the space most courteously allowed to him by the editors was necessarily very circumscribed. He has now, therefore, recast his original letters, omitting some points, whilst considerably expanding his remarks upon others, with the view of thus making the topics discussed more useful to the readers of the present volume.

## PART I.

### SCRIPTURE AND THE CREED OF PIUS IV.

'A PROTESTANT' brings forward what he considers to be 'a crushing difficulty,' namely, the obligation under which I labour—an obligation impossible, according to his ideas, to be fulfilled—never 'to understand nor interpret the Scripture except according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers' (Profession of Faith of Pius IV.).

Nothing can be more feathery than this supposed pulverising weight. There are two things which I am bound to do: (1) I am to interpret the Scripture 'according to that sense which our Holy Mother Church holds and has held, whose office it is to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Holy Scriptures:' (2) I am bound never 'to receive and interpret them otherwise than in accordance with the unanimous consent of the Fathers.' No language can be more simple. What the Church has declared to be the true meaning of Scripture, such is the interpretation I must adopt whenever I know that she *has* proclaimed that meaning.

But although the Church has proposed the Holy Scriptures to her children as the principal though not the sole fountain of revelation, she has not deemed it necessary to interpret authoritatively every passage of the sacred text. Her whole teaching on revelation is derived from the divine word written, *i.e.* the Scriptures, and the divine word unwritten, *i.e.* divine tradition. Her doctrine, therefore, although expressed in various



forms and modes, consists mainly of the sense of Scripture, as understood by her under the guidance of that Spirit Who has dictated the Scriptures. This includes a large body of doctrine, and therefore to that ample extent she has exercised her office as interpreter of the meaning of Scripture. 'Scripture being unsystematic, and the faith which it propounds being scattered through its documents, and understood only *when they are viewed as a whole*, the creeds aim at concentrating its *general spirit*, so as to give security to the Church, as far as may be, that its members take that definite view of that faith which is alone the true one' (Newman's Arians, c. ii. s. 1). The above remark, although referring more immediately to the early creeds, is applicable to all dogmatic statements of the Church, whether direct, as in creeds and definitions, or indirect, as in her liturgical devotions.

Besides expressing the sense of Scripture in general through her dogmatic pronouncements, the Church has in several instances given an authoritative interpretation of particular parts of Scripture, amongst which are: Matt. xxviii. 19; John x. 30, iii. 6, xvi. 17, i. 14, xv. 26, xvi. 13, xx. 23; Luke xxii. 19, 20; James v. 14; &c. Whenever the Church has affixed a particular meaning to particular texts, the faithful are obliged to accept that as the real sense of those passages. Moreover, as the Word of God cannot be inconsistent with itself, no Catholic can take *any* portion of Scripture in a sense opposed to the faith of the Church, for this would be a denial of either her infallibility, or of the consistency of Scripture.

The Church has that knowledge of the Christian faith, and therefore of the Scriptures, which no individual could possess unless he had the same pro-

mises guaranteed by Christ Himself, and the same supernatural gifts, and it is precisely for this reason that all her members are bound to conform their minds to hers in the interpretation of the faith and of the Scriptures. To allow opposition on these points on the part of individuals would be tantamount to an admission that there was no fixed unalterable truth in the Scriptures; or that it was not ascertainable with absolute certainty; or that being ascertainable, it was not binding on men's souls, under pain of damnation if they rejected or doubted it; or that she, the Catholic Church, did not believe in her own expressed claim to know and teach the truth infallibly, and to impose it on men's consciences with a divine authority. To allow her own children to contradict her interpretation of the faith would be to confess that she was a human sect and not the Church of God. Moreover, as her faith is ever in perfect harmony with the sense of the Scriptures so far as the doctrinal area of Scripture extends, for the area of the whole Christian revelation is not limited to the letter of Scripture alone, to the exclusion of apostolic tradition, it is evident that whoever so explains Scripture as to oppose the faith of the Church, must, in reality, be falsifying the true meaning of Scripture. Her children, therefore, are justly forbidden to exercise a license which would be a perversion of the truth, an unlawful abuse of their intellect, and an outrage upon the spirit of Scripture, under the pretext of obeying its letter.

Whilst, however, the Church calls upon her members to adopt her interpretation of individual texts of Scripture whenever she has manifestly made a formal exposition of their words, and whilst with regard to other texts, which she has not distinctly explained, she

forbids any interpretation contrary to her own teaching on faith and morals, she nevertheless does not restrict the liberty of textual exposition, except under the above-mentioned limitation and such other conditions as reason itself would suggest. Historical science, philology, archæology, and everything that can serve to elucidate Scripture are welcomed by the Church, for she does not preoccupy the ground by any detailed interpretation of all Scripture, and human skill therefore has a free and large scope for its appliances, provided that they are not perverted to establish opposition to the declared doctrine of the Church.

‘The Church does not enter into all the investigations which excite the attention of philologists : for instance, she does not believe it to be an obligation for her, and consequently does not hold it as her exclusive right, to fix the epoch and origin of the book of Job, to settle the chronological order of the Pauline epistles, to judge of the object in writing the Apocalypse, &c. She does not explain philologically either the words or verses, or the mutual connection of the several parts with the whole ; archæological details are equally out of her sphere. In short, her definitions embrace only dogma and morals. This is the purpose of the interpretation given by the Church. As to the method of this explication, the Church does not proceed according to the rules of hermeneutics ; she defines the contents of the sacred books according to the spirit that reigns throughout them as a whole’ (Moehler’s Symbolism, sec. xlii.).

The Church, observes the same author, has no occasion, like the various sects, to search into Scripture for a creed, for she existed before Scripture. ‘She holds the truths which she proclaims from the very

mouth of Christ. Moreover, the Holy Ghost has engraven them on her conscience, or, as S. Irenæus says, on her heart; she has, therefore, a direct certitude of her teachings. The essential verities contained in Scripture are perpetually present to the Church, for they constitute her existence, her life, her soul, and her all.'

It is clear from what has been said, that since the Church in her public, official, and corporate capacity is principally a commentator upon Scripture, in so far as she is a teacher of the doctrines which are the dogmatic sense of Scripture, it is utterly erroneous to suppose that no Catholic is allowed to draw any meaning from the words of Scripture until he has first found out what is the Church's interpretation of each distinct passage which he desires to understand.

As the Catholic Church has not promulgated an explanation of the text of all the Holy Scriptures, either minced into verses or divided into larger portions, neither have the individual Fathers who have flourished in the Church accomplished such a work. Some Fathers have commented upon various parts of the Old and New Testament, but they never professed, nor was it ever required of them, to put forth an exposition of Scripture stamped with the authority of the Church, as representing her interpretation of the inspired record. I am not obliged by the creed of Pius IV., nor is any Catholic, to interpret all the various parts of the Scriptures, Old and New, according to the unanimous biblical exposition of the Fathers, for the simplest of all reasons—because such an exposition does not and never did exist. The mistake of persons who argue like 'A Protestant' arises from a misconception of the words 'unanimous consent of the Fathers.'

The 'consent of the Fathers' is a well-known phrase in Catholic terminology, and is not intended to apply to them considered as biblical expositors of individual texts of the Holy Scriptures, so much as to them in their broad general character as ancient and illustrious witnesses, defenders, and teachers of the faith of the Church. The creed of Pius IV. does not mention those Fathers in particular who have expounded the letter of Scripture, nor any individual Father, but *the Fathers*; that is, the Fathers considered as a whole, and not only so, but as united in one common agreement. For their chief value as authorities depends upon their unity between themselves and with the Church—a unity manifested amongst individuals varying greatly in country, time, natural and acquired abilities, and temperament.

When there is a morally unanimous consent of Fathers upon a matter of doctrine, or upon the interpretation of definite passages of Scripture, the Church considers it to be a certain proof that such a doctrine or interpretation is not the product of the individual minds of those Fathers, but a tradition from Christ and His Apostles, which they have received and handed down to posterity in union with the Church herself, of which they were members and generally pastors of exalted position in the hierarchy.

How, then, could the Church, consistently with her principles, allow her children to draw from the language of Scripture a meaning opposed to the unanimous teaching of the Fathers? The Scripture, it must be remembered, is the written revelation of God, and the sense which is drawn from it by an interpreter is meant by him to represent the revealed sense of the words, because he believes his own interpretation to be the true

sense, and on the supposition that the language which he expounds is a revealed expression of inspiration, its true sense must be the revealed meaning. Whoever, therefore, persists in holding something to be divine revelation which is opposed to the universal doctrine or interpretation of the Fathers, is doing nothing less than affirming practically that the Fathers taught contrary to revealed truth, and therefore he justly falls under the condemnation of the Church.

The 'unanimous consent of the Fathers' no more signifies that such consent is to be found in a *detailed exposition of the whole text* of Scripture than the phrase 'sense of Scripture which our Holy Mother the Church holds' signifies that *she* has put forth an authoritative minute exposition of the whole Bible. The same rule of interpretation which applies to one case applies equally to the other.

The favourite argument, therefore, of Protestant controversialists against those who subscribe to the Creed of Pius, by which they endeavour to convict them of incurring an obligation which it is impossible for them to fulfil, falls to the ground when the words of that creed are interpreted in their intended sense, and not perverted by ignorance or sophistry. The Protestant objection assumes what neither the Council of Trent nor any Catholic theologian ever dreamed of asserting or implying, namely, that 'unanimous consent' is exactly equivalent to a unanimous interpretation of every line in Scripture, and that Catholics are not free to draw a meaning from *any* part of Scripture, because the Fathers have not put forth a concordant exposition of the *whole*.

## READING OF THE SCRIPTURES.

There are few Catholic questions which have been more misunderstood, and represented in a more calumnious and exaggerated form, than the legislation of the Church in regard to the Holy Scriptures. The real facts can be briefly stated. Whatever laws the Church may have passed in reference to the reading of the Scriptures have been of an entirely disciplinary character, and therefore capable of being modified or totally rescinded, according to the varying circumstances that might affect the moral element involved in the question. As a matter of history, there has *never* been any law forbidding the faithful, whether priests or laymen, from reading the Bible in the original languages. 'All persons can read the Holy Bible in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, and in the Greek of the New; in the Greek version of the Septuagint; in all the ancient Oriental versions, and in the Latin Vulgate' (Malou, *Lecture de la Sainte Bible*, p. 60).

With regard to translations of the Bible in the vernacular, the Church never passed any general law forbidding all the faithful, whether priests or laity, universally and absolutely from reading them.

She has, however, claimed, and at various periods has actually exercised, the right of deciding within what limits, and under what qualifying conditions of intellect and will as well as of ecclesiastical regulation, the perusal of the Bible in the vernacular shall be lawful.

But this right was never even partially put into operation until more than a thousand years after her existence; and then the legislation was forced upon her by the necessity of the case. Serious evils began to spring

up in the diocese of Metz at the very end of the twelfth century, in consequence of clandestine meetings held by men and women to read an unauthorised translation of the Psalter, the Gospels, and the Epistles of S. Paul in French, and to preach to each other. This led to a defiant rejection of their spiritual rulers, and the evil was denounced in 1199 to Pope Innocent III. The Albigenses were, however, the first direct cause of any prohibitory decree being enacted ; one was passed by the Provincial Council of Toulouse in 1229, by which the laity under its jurisdiction were forbidden to have any part of the Scriptures in French. The Albigenses were, even according to the Protestant Hallam, a striking example of the 'wildest perversion' of the meaning of Scripture (Middle Ages, iii. 466). These heretics were atrocious assailants of morality and government, as well as of Christian truth.

The Reformation in the sixteenth century, whose leading principle was the denial of the authority of the Church to teach the faith and to interpret Scripture, led to more legislation on the same point. To admit, indeed, the unrestricted right of any Catholic—whether ignorant or learned, whether heretically or piously disposed—to read any translation, authorised or not, true or false, with notes or without, would have been for the Church to abdicate utterly her sacred office as responsible guardian and pastor of the souls committed to her care.

In order to justify the usual charge against the Church, that she is an enemy on principle to the Scriptures, their circulation or their perusal by her members, it will be necessary to do what has ever been, and ever will be, an impossibility. It will be necessary to prove (1) that any version in any vernacular is the genuine unadulterated Word of God ; (2) that the external lan-



guage of translations cannot fail to convey to the mind of any reader the exact meaning which God intends to be attached to the original revelation; (3) that the written Word is the sole means to any one of knowing Christian truth; (4) that each individual who is physically able to read the Scriptures is bound to do so by a divine obligation; (5) that each individual has a natural and inalienable right to draw from the Scriptures any doctrine that may approve itself to his mind and conscience, uncontrolled and unguided by any interpretative source independent of, and external to, his individual self; and (6) that there is no Church on the earth with a commission to teach infallibly the faith of Christ.

If the popular accusations against the Church be analysed, it will be found that they all resolve themselves into the above-mentioned assumptions, either in part or as a combined whole.

The Church denies all these assumptions as erroneous in fact and pernicious in practice; and yet Protestants constantly argue as if the Church culpably failed to justify her conduct in regard to the Scriptures; whereas the real fault lies with those who judge of the Catholic Church upon principles antagonistic to her whole faith and constitution.

The state of the question about reading the Scriptures was explained with such admirable clearness by the Catholic Vicars-Apostolic of England in a declaration made by them in 1826, that any further remarks by me are rendered superfluous. The following is an extract from the declaration:

‘The Catholic Church has never forbidden or discouraged the reading or circulation of authentic copies of the Sacred Scriptures in the original languages. . . . As to the translation of the Holy Scriptures into modern

languages, the Catholic Church requires that none should be put into the hands of the faithful but such as are acknowledged by ecclesiastical authority to be accurate and conformable to the originals. There never was a general law of the Catholic Church prohibiting the reading of authorised translations of the Scriptures; but considering that many by their ignorance and evil dispositions have perverted the meaning of the sacred text to their own destruction, the Catholic Church had thought it prudent to make a regulation that the faithful should be guided in the matter by the advice of their respective pastors. . . . The Catholics of England of mature years have permission to read authentic and approved translations of the Holy Scriptures, with explanatory notes, and are expected to read them in the spirit of piety, humility, and obedience.' The Vicars-Apostolic proceed to refer to the rescript of Pius VII., April 18, 1820, who earnestly exhorted the Vicars-Apostolic to encourage the faithful to 'read books of pious instruction, and *particularly* the Holy Scriptures, in translations approved by ecclesiastical authority, because to those who are well disposed nothing can be more useful, more consoling, more animating than the reading of the Holy Scriptures, understood in their true sense.' The declaration then continues: 'But when the reading and circulation of the Scriptures are urged and recommended as the entire rule of faith, as the sole means by which men are to be brought to the certain and specific knowledge of the doctrine, precepts, and institutions of Christ; and when the Scriptures so read and circulated are left to the interpretation and private judgment of each individual, then such reading, circulation, and interpretation are forbidden by the Catholic Church, because the Catholic Church knows that the circulation

of the Scriptures, and the interpretation of them by each one's private judgment, was not the means ordained by Christ for the communication of the true knowledge of His law to all nations. She knows that Christianity was established in many countries before one book of the New Testament was written—that it was not by means of the Scriptures that the Apostles and their successors converted nations or any one nation to the unity of the Christian faith—that the unauthorised reading and circulation of the Scriptures and the interpretation of them by private judgment are calculated to lead men to contradictory doctrines on the primary articles of the Christian belief; to inconsistent forms of worship, which cannot all be constituent parts of the uniform and sublime system of Christianity; to errors and fanaticism in religion, and to sedition and the greatest disorders in states and kingdoms.' The whole document is given in the Appendix to Canon Flanagan's 'History of the Church in England,' pp. 509, 510.

#### THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

'A Protestant' makes the reckless assertion that the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin 'raises her above the pale of humanity, and elevates her to the rank and dignity of a goddess.' Does this assailant know what that doctrine is? If he does *not*, he has not the shadow of a right to discuss the question; if he *does*, then he misapprehends the results of the dogma. The 'Immaculate Conception' signifies that God, by His merciful grace and by virtue of the foreseen merits and redemption of His Son, preserved the soul of His Son's future Mother from that penal deprivation of grace which affects the children of

fallen man, and which is called original sin. At the instant of her soul's creation by God He filled it with His sanctifying grace; hence the conception of the Blessed Virgin by her mother is declared to have been *immaculate*; i.e. no stain of original sin passed into her soul when it was united to the body formed in her mother's womb. 'We define that the doctrine has been revealed by God and is to be believed by all the faithful, which holds that the most Blessed Virgin Mary was in the first instant of her conception preserved free from all stain of original fault through the singular grace and privilege of Almighty God, and in regard of (*intuitu*) the merits of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the human race' (Bull of Pius IX., 8th December 1854).

How can this exceptional gift of grace raise Mary, the Mother of Jesus, 'above the pale of humanity?' Does grace, then, destroy creatureship? Did the grace which filled the human soul of Christ transform that humanity into Divinity, so that we cannot say of Christ that He was true and perfect *man*? To allege, therefore, that the Immaculate Conception raises Mary 'above the pale of humanity, and gives her the rank and dignity of a goddess,' betrays either gross ignorance of theology, or is a deliberate calumny on the Catholic faith.

As to the language of S. Alphonsus de Liguori, nothing can be more unjust, both to him and to the truth, than the mode of quotation adopted by 'A Protestant.' He singles out a number of isolated expressions from S. Alphonsus de Liguori, without reference to the context, or to the broad and real distinction made by all Catholics between the finite, participated, and intercessory office of the highest of saints, and the absolute supreme nature of God, and

the infinitely precious mediatorship of the Son of God. If Mary, the Mother of God, is described as having 'obtained our salvation,' as being 'made omnipotent,' and as having 'the same power as the Son,' all such language must be taken in the sense in which Catholics use it, and *not* in the sense which hostile Protestants choose to attach to it. For they ignorantly or purposely confound primary ideas with secondary, and the inalienable dignity and rights possessed by Christ—their plenary and principal owner—with those which He, in His love and condescension, imparts to His Mother and the Saints, according to their relative merits. Whatever privileges and influences they have are ever in perfect conformity to His will; and since they owe their origin and value to His merits, they are only operative according to the laws of His providence in governing His kingdom in heaven and upon earth.

When controversialists appeal to S. Alphonsus as an authority to prove that Catholics substitute the Blessed Virgin for Christ, they take very good care never to quote a single line from his writings that would tend to correct this false impression on the minds of their readers. Why do they not quote from his Introduction to the Reader in his 'Glories of Mary' the following passages? Speaking of 'certain propositions which may seem hazardous, or perhaps obscure,' he says, 'I beg that you will understand them *according to the rules of sound theology* and the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church, of which I declare myself a most obedient son.' Again, 'God, to glorify the Mother of the Redeemer, has so determined and disposed that of her great charity she should intercede in behalf of all those for whom His divine Son paid and offered the *superabundant price of His precious Blood, in which*

*alone is our salvation, life, and resurrection.*' The very first words of the author's dedicatory prayer begin, 'My most loving Redeemer and Lord, Jesus Christ, I, Thy miserable servant,' &c.; and, addressing the Blessed Virgin, he says, 'Thou well knowest that, *after Jesus*, I have placed my entire hope of salvation in thee.' But how many Protestant writers have ever yet been candid enough to cite anything of this kind, which would show that whatever language S. Alphonsus has used in reference to the Mother of God must be interpreted according to the doctrine which he held about Him in Whose 'Blood alone,' he declares, 'is our salvation'?

Let Protestants interpret the language of Catholics in respect to the B. Virgin as they interpret certain passages of Scripture in regard to other finite beings. S. Peter says we are '*partakers of the divine nature*;' are we therefore gods? Is Pantheism true because God will finally be '*all in all*'? S. Paul said, '*I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me*;' was he therefore absorbed into Christ? He also said, '*I can do all things through Christ*;' was he therefore really omnipotent? He declared to the Corinthians that he acted '*in the person of Christ*;' was his original personality therefore lost or suspended in its operations? He desired to '*save some*' of his brethren; was he therefore a Saviour like Christ? S. John declared to his disciples, '*Ye know all things*;' were they therefore omniscient? Ananias said to Saul of Tarsus, '*Arise and be baptised, and wash away thy sins*;' did Saul therefore cleanse away his sins by his own act? Does every person who converts a sinner confer upon him salvation because S. James declares that such a one '*shall save his soul from death*'? The same Apostle also says that

the Father of Lights has 'begotten us by the Word of truth;' but S. Paul says, speaking of himself, 'In Christ Jesus, by the Gospel, *I have* begotten you.' Is there, then, no distinction between the supernatural generation of souls by the Father of Lights and by His servant S. Paul? Glory and honour are inscribed to God and also to '*every one* that worketh good;' is there, then, no difference in the 'glory and honour' rendered to God and that which is rendered to the good 'Jew or Gentile,' because the same terms are used in both cases by S. Paul?

These and numerous other instances might be quoted to show that grammar is not the only mode of interpreting language, and that words do not always mean what any person chooses to extract out of all the possibilities of their signification considered simply as words, and without reference to the mind of the writer. 'A Protestant' who charges us with making Mary into a goddess by our phraseology should remember that infidels can just as easily, and as irrationally, turn against him the words of Scripture, and pervert them to a meaning which is absurd, revolting, and blasphemous.

The Catholic doctrine is, that Mary, however high, is a creature, and therefore *infinitely* inferior to God and to her Son, Who is God made man. By this fundamental faith and distinction, ALL language in reference to the blessed Mother of God must be interpreted. If I say, 'Save me, O God,' or 'O Jesus,' I mean, 'Save me by Thy infinite power and merits;' if I say, 'Save me, O Mary,' I mean, 'Save me by those means of influence and prayer which, by the mercy of thy God and Creator, and through the merits of thy Son, thou dost possess.' If Protestants wilfully determine to reject or

ignore the Catholic distinctions, and then hold Catholics answerable for a meaning attached to certain words used in common towards Christ and Mary, which meaning Catholics utterly disavow, this conduct is not only unfair and illogical, but simply wicked.

Protestants are often shocked, as if some terrible enormity was committed, some sacrilegious confusion of God with the B. Virgin, when they see any religious homage conjointly addressed to both, without any special difference in the language used. As, for instance, in inscriptions carved upon churches, which are thus declared to be dedicated to 'God Almighty *and* the B. Virgin.' This conjunctive *and* is considered to be essentially blasphemous, as though it were capable of expressing no idea except that of the equality between the creature and the Creator. This very fear, however, and suspicion of a confusion between God and the B. Virgin, is a sign, not of a thoughtful, just, and profound sensitiveness to the honour of God, but of narrowness of mind, of the want of practice in assigning to God and His saints the honour due to Him and also to them, but due according to the immutably relative distinctions between the infinite perfection of the divine and the finite perfection of the earthly natures. The Protestant, too, is not only unused to the habitual practice of giving the two kinds of honour, one to God and one to the saints, but, on account of his disbelief in the reality of inherent sanctity in creatures, however exalted they may be through grace, he fails to recognise in that sanctity *any merit* whatever, and therefore fails to recognise its rights to receive any honour from men. He will acknowledge the claim of any excellency upon his homage except that which God Himself especially crowns with His love and His rewards: 'Whosoever shall glorify



Me, him will *I glorify*' (1 Kings ii. 30, al. Samuel, Prot. vers.).

The Catholic has no nervous superstitious fear of using the same words with reference to God and His creatures, to represent higher and lower degrees of homage, because his ground is clear before him, and because he understands his own duty and knows that God understands the language which he uses.

It is singular that so strong an objection should be urged against Catholic phraseology by those who profess so great a reverence for every word of Scripture. Have they never read such expressions as the following: 'The people believed the Lord *and* His servant Moses' (Exod. xiv. 31); 'The people bowed down their heads, and worshipped God *and* then the king' (1 Paralip. xxix. 20, al. Chronicles); 'They feared the Lord *and* Samuel' (1 Kings xii. 18, al. Samuel) ?

If the following passage were to be met with in some Catholic book of devotions, it would no doubt be condemned at once by many of its Protestant readers as exceedingly profane and decidedly anti-Scriptural: 'Blessed are Mary and Jesus.' 'How dreadful,' they would exclaim, 'it is for these Romanists actually to class the Redeemer and the Virgin together under one benediction, as if there were no difference between the blessedness of God and His creature; and, what is even worse and more appalling in its audacity, they name Mary *before* Jesus!' Yet this terrible sentence is nothing but pure Scripture itself, with a change only in the words; for what else is the meaning of the exclamation of S. Elizabeth, who spoke, 'filled with the Holy Ghost:' 'Blessed art thou' (Mary) 'amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb' (Jesus) ? (Luke i. 42.) S. Paul puts himself before his fellow

Christians in this remarkable proximity to his Redeemer: 'You became followers of *us and* the Lord' (1 Thess. i. 6). Yet who dares to charge S. Paul with irreverence?

Another objection is frequently made to Catholic phraseology on the ground that, although well-educated Catholics may possibly not confound the creature with the Creator in their thoughts or prayers, it is utterly preposterous to suppose that the bulk of Catholic worshippers—the representative 'illiterate Romanists' as they are familiarly known to the Protestant public—make, and bear in mind practically these difficult and subtle distinctions.

This argument is one which can be easily tested, and it will be soon discovered to have no foundation except in a preconceived theory held by persons who themselves have had *no* experience of what they profess to pronounce upon with more than judicial infallibility.

Let any ordinary unlearned Catholic of any nation be fairly examined, with the purpose of ascertaining his real belief, and not of 'seeking to catch something out of his mouth that they might accuse him' (Luke xi. 54), and the result will never vary. It will be found that he has such a definite grasp of the distinction between the finite and the infinite, that he *could not* confound the B. Virgin with God, unless he were idiotic. The poorest Catholic beggar has learnt from childhood that there is one act of religion, and that the highest, which is and can be offered only to God—the act of sacrifice; he does not learn this merely by his brain, he sees the Mass constantly with its august ceremonies, and its whole spirit possesses his mind, affections, and imagination. He has a power and a way of adoring God through the daily oblation to Him of His incarnate Son

on the Altar, which Protestants cannot have, because they deny the doctrine. A Protestant can worship God only by his prayers ; when, therefore, he finds an 'illiterate Romanist' praying to the B. Virgin, he considers that he is giving to her what is due only to God ; for since the Protestant has no sacrifice with which to adore God, he, arguing from his own poverty of worship, imagines that the Catholic is in the same condition, and has also nothing to present to God but his prayers ; so that when he prays to the B. Virgin, as well as to God, the Protestant supposes that this fact alone proves a mental confusion in regard to the *objects* to whom the Catholic prays ; as if the act of praying to God *and* Mary equalised in the Catholic's mind the Creator with the creature. But even if the Catholic could by any possibility forget what he has always been taught, namely, to pray to God *solely* as the supreme fount of all grace, and to Mary *solely* as an intercessor with God, the Mass would be to him a perpetual safeguard from error ; it is the grand central act of his Christian life ; it groups every other religious idea around itself ; it is the key to all his adoration. God, contemplated through the sublime and clear light of the Mass, is understood in His perfection, justice, and mercy, with a power and definiteness, to which the Protestant's ability to realise Him is immeasurably inferior. There may be a difficulty for the Protestant to keep before *his* mind the distinction between the Catholic's idea of the Mother of God and of God Himself, because his idea of Mary's glory is far below the truth, and his idea of God is far below the conception of the most ignorant pious Catholic ; but the difficulty with the Catholic would be *not* to distinguish between the two.

I may observe, moreover, that in this age especially, it is not wise to lay an exaggerated stress on secular wisdom in connection with religion, as though intellectual culture were a test of religious truth, or of any man's knowledge of Christian verities. It is far better to be the most 'illiterate Romanist,' and yet believe in the only certainties which will lead to eternal life, than to be an illustrious modern scientific philosopher, seeing everything in that earth which is only God's footstool, and yet blind to Him Who is the Creator of both heaven and earth.

Though phrases vary, and the style of oratorical and devotional language is not that of rigid dogmatic science, yet the main idea about the B. Virgin has been the same in the Catholic Church from the primitive ages to the present. S. Irenæus, in the second century, affirms that 'as Eve became the cause of death to herself and to all mankind, so Mary too, having the predestined Man and yet a Virgin, being obedient, became *the cause of salvation* both to herself and to all mankind' (Hær. iii. 22, 4, v. 19). S. Ephraim Syrus, in the fourth century, calls her the 'Vine by whom we are translated from death to life.' Theodotus, one of the Fathers of Ephesus, in the fifth century, says, 'Hail, all-undefiled Mother of holiness; 'we have *even now* earnestly to *run to her*, not as in forgetfulness of the past, but in desire of what has to come' (Ap. Amphil.). S. Proclus, in the fifth century, 'Run through all creation in your thoughts, and see if there be any equal to, or greater than, the Holy Virgin Mother of God' (Orat. vi.). S. Ambrose, in the same century, 'She was alone, and wrought the world's salvation' (Ep. i. 49, 2, in Ps. 118).

In the oldest Liturgy in the world, that of S. James,

the B. Virgin is described as 'our all-holy, the God-bearing, pure, and most glorious Lady; more honourable than the Cherubim, and incomparably more glorious than the Seraphim.'

The above are only a few specimens of the position held by the B. Virgin in the mind and writings of the primitive Church.

On this subject, see F. Newman's 'Letter to Dr. Pusey on the Eirenicon' (p. 35-72).

Probably 'A Protestant' will be surprised to know that John Huss, whom the idolaters of the Reformation are fond of eulogising, thus alluded to the B. Virgin in his so-called 'Confession of Faith:': 'I pray for my accusers to the most pure Mother of the Saviour, the Restorer of the human race, the Queen of Heaven, endowed with a nature altogether angelic, more happy, crowned with more glory, and more abounding in the gifts of grace, than all the blessed, her Son only excepted.' Œcolompadius called her also 'the Queen of the world, and the most sublime of created beings' (Nampon, Catholic Doctrine, art. Invocation of the Virgin).

I am asked to produce any single text from the New Testament about the mediation of the B. Virgin, or prayer to her, or command to pray to her. This challenge is worthless, as a serious appeal to argument, unless it can be demonstrated that nothing was ever a fact in Christianity, and nothing ever lawful for Christians to do, except what is explicitly recorded in the New Testament; this idea is a pure assumption of Protestants without the shadow of any foundation but their own imagination. Does not S. John declare that the 'world would not be able to contain the books that should be written,' if they were to record all the 'other things'

not mentioned by him, and yet which were actually done by Christ? (John xxi. 25.) If Christians were taught to ask each other's prayers, is it probable that no one asked the Mother of Jesus for her prayers whilst she survived? And unless the silence of Scripture proves that the *contrary* took place of what is *unrecorded*, it is puerile to argue that no one sought her intercession after her death because the fact is not mentioned in the Gospels or Epistles. Where is it mentioned that any one prayed to the Holy Ghost? Where is it mentioned that infant children can be baptised, the only allusion being to 'believers'? Where is it mentioned that the Sabbath-day commandment is transferred to Sunday? Where is it mentioned that it is lawful to swear, when we are told distinctly to 'swear not at all'? Where is to be found the record that the law of the Holy Ghost (Acts xv. 28) on 'abstaining from blood and things strangled' (v. 29)—a law solemnly proclaimed in the Council of Jerusalem—has been cancelled by an equal authority? This challenge from the silence of Scripture sounds plausible and decisive to the already biased and shallow readers of controversy, but it is a mere trick of polemical charlatanism, and scarcely worth exposing.

The following dilemma will give an illustration of the fallacy of deducing from the mere silence of Scripture a positive argument against any fact or doctrine :

It must be a *fact* that if the B. Virgin has died at all, she died either *before* the last portion of the New Testament was written or *afterwards*. If she died *before*, then where is the inspired text relating the event? If the fact be not related, then, according to the favourite theory of 'A Protestant's' argumentation, that omis-

sion ought to prove that she did *not* die before the Gospels, Epistles, or Apocalypse were written.

If, on the contrary, she died *after* the Scripture was closed, it is a mere imposition upon common sense to challenge me to show *from Scripture* any hint or command about asking her intercession after her departure from the earth; logic abhors a vacuum quite as strongly as nature; *ex nihilo nihil fit*.

#### THE LANGUAGE OF THE MASS.

Where has 'A Protestant' been educated, for he seems to have very peculiar views about language, and also of the crass ignorance and indefinitely elastic credulity of his readers? He has made a thrilling discovery—his pen throbs in unison with his palpitating heart, as a solemn duty urges him to make a '*further disclosure* of the *fearful teaching* of the Church of Rome.' What is this portentous secret which he unveils to the expectant anxiety of his readers? There is a rubric in the Missal about defects in the celebration of Mass, and—awful to relate—this rubric in a Latin Liturgy is actually in Latin! But the mystery of sin grows deeper and blacker—the Church of Rome adopts this language to '*conceal* her teaching on the subject.' This is no fancy—'the reason will be plain to all,' as soon as 'A Protestant' has dragged forth to the light, and unwound, the cunning serpent's tail. The Latin language used to be taught to every respectable educated boy in every grammar school in England; it is spoken still in Hungary, but 'A Protestant' speaks of it as if it were some antediluvian tongue or Egyptian hieroglyphics. He evidently thinks that he has accomplished an as-

tounding feat in unearthing this rubric for his readers, and I shall leave him 'alone in his glory.'

After this 'disclosure,' one is quite prepared for the argument, in his first letter, from 1 Corinthians xiv., against the use of Latin in the Mass. S. Paul is alluding to the case of those who had a miraculous gift of strange tongues, which were only understood by themselves—'He speaketh *not* unto men, but unto God, for *no man* heareth,' *i.e.* understandeth (xiv. 2); and he says that one who prophesies (*i.e.* teaches) in a language intelligible to man, is greater than he who, by speaking in a miraculoustongue, thus only 'edifieth himself' (v. 4), *unless perhaps he interpret*' (v. 5). S. Paul also deals with the case of those persons who offered up prayers from their heart and expressed this devotional fervour in a language which they themselves did not comprehend. So that their understanding was 'without fruit;' it did not produce any intellectual edification or refreshment to their souls; it was a movement of the will and effective part of their nature towards God, but there it began and ended. If they pray in the presence of others and speak an unknown tongue, then the listeners are not edified any more than themselves: 'If thou bless with the spirit' (*i.e.* with the heart, as distinct from the intellect), 'how shall he that holdeth the place of the unlearned say Amen to thy blessing?' (v. 16.) The Apostle has before his mind the case of persons who do not know the intellectual side of their own prayers, whose heart is inarticulate, and who speak what no one does or can comprehend unless it be interpreted.

What can this condition of things possibly have to do with the language of the Mass? S. Paul's admonition has just as much bearing on the solar system as it



has upon the question whether the fixed public liturgy of a universal Church cannot lawfully be in a language so ancient, easy, and well-known as Latin. Latin and Greek were the living languages of Western and Eastern Christendom when the respective liturgies were composed, and if Latin has been retained by the Catholic Church, it has been so because the advantage of having an ancient, unchanging, uniform liturgy for a Church which has 'one faith,' and is diffused through all countries, overweighs the disadvantages. For those who are ignorant of Latin there are cheap translations, and all who cannot read any language are thoroughly taught to follow and understand the main portions of the Mass. Preaching and catechising are always in the vernacular, and numerous public devotions as well.

The broad principle on which the Church has always acted is to retain that language for the Mass in which it was first said at the introduction of Christianity in any particular country. If the language in course of time, or through other causes, ceased to be the ordinary tongue of the people, the Mass was not altered in order to suit those changes. As in some places even different cities had distinct dialects, such a modification, if adopted to suit every variety of language, would have resulted in great and obvious evils. In cases of the recent conversion of barbarous people to the faith, 'it belongs,' says Benedict XIV., 'to the Apostolic See to permit the use of the vernacular in celebrating the divine offices, but it can be truly affirmed that the Holy See is more inclined to select natives who are intelligent and instruct them in Latin, than to grant the use of the vulgar tongue in the celebration of Mass' (*De Sac. Missæ*, l. ii. c. ii.). The Council of Trent declares that it has not seemed good to the Fathers (of the Council)

that the Mass should be everywhere celebrated in the vulgar tongue; it 'commands that those who have the cure of souls should *frequently explain*, or cause others to explain, during the Mass, some of the things that are read in the Mass' (Sess. xxii. c. viii.).

It must be remembered also that the Mass is not only a series of prayers in which the people have as much share of participation as the priest who celebrates; it is one august action, the meaning of which is well understood by the worshippers, even though they may not be able to read their letters. Catholics are trained from childhood to follow with their eyes and ears, as well as with their spirit, the whole development of the sacrificial worship. 'It is not a mere form of words—it is a great action, the greatest action that can be on earth. It is not the invocation merely, but, if I dare use the word, the evocation of the Eternal. He becomes present on the altar before Whom angels bow and devils tremble. This is that awful event which is the scope and is the interpretation of every part of the solemnity. Words are necessary but as means, not as ends; they are not mere addresses to the Throne of grace, they are instruments of what is far higher—of consecration, of sacrifice' (Loss and Gain, F. Newman, p. 265, 266).

If, as it is affirmed by some, it is contrary to the law of Christ, as expounded by S. Paul, that any part of the Christian service should be in a non-vernacular tongue, why did not our Lord indicate this in some way to His disciples? He denounced the self-righteousness of the Pharisees, why did He not condemn the practice of celebrating the Temple-worship and reading the Law there, and also in the synagogues, in a tongue unintelligible at that period to the generality of the

Jewish people?—for Aramaic, and not Hebrew, was the language chiefly in use. The fact is beyond rational dispute; but as there are some controversialists who deny everything, I will subjoin some evidence of the statement.

The Babylonish captivity was the original cause of the decline of the Hebrew language amongst the Jewish people. 'There was one thing which neither authority nor piety, neither academy nor synagogue, could restore to its original power and glory—the Hebrew language. It became more and more the language of *the few, the learned*, the holy language, or, still more exactly, the "*language of the Temple*," set aside almost exclusively for the holy service of religion. The sacred worship itself in temple and synagogue was almost entirely carried on in pure Hebrew. The common people gradually lost all knowledge of the tongue in which were written the books to be read to them' (Emanuel Deutsch, art. Targum, Smith's Bib. Dict.). Hence interpretations in the Aramaic or language of the multitude and the establishment of oral interpreters became necessary both for temple and synagogue. 'The Rabbi, when he read in the synagogue, had near to him an interpreter, who translated it into Chaldaic for the use of the people. Under the Roman empire Chaldaic, which had been always used by the Jews of Palestine, became in its turn a dead language. For men, as at the present day, there was no national idiom except the liturgical—that of the learned; the language which the Jews spoke was that of the land in which they dwelt' (Champagny, Rome et la Judée, p. 73).

Amongst other incidental confirmations of the ignorance of the ancient Hebrew on the part of the Jews in general may be also mentioned the mistake of the

people, who on hearing from the Cross the words, '*Eli, Eli, lamma sabaethani*' (Matt. xxvii. 46), thought that Christ was calling for Elias, probably, as many commentators suppose, because they did not understand Hebrew.

It is also a significant fact that there is no proof of any one book of the New Testament having been written in the ancient language. The Hebrew version of S. Matthew to which S. Jerome refers was, according to his own account, in the Chaldaic or Syriac tongue, although written in Hebraic characters. This, too, was the opinion of Papias, Origen, Irenæus, Eusebius, and Epiphanius.

The 'Hebrew tongue' in which Christ spoke to Saul on his way to Damascus (Acts xxvi. 14) is generally admitted to have been the vernacular Hebrew or Aramaic, and the fact that S. Paul mentions this tongue in particular shows that he probably addressed our Lord in some other language—Greek, for example, or Latin. As S. Paul was born in Cilicia, his native tongue was, almost certainly, the dialect of the Septuagint, or Hellenistic Greek, of which the especial peculiarity was that it aimed at expressing in Greek—appropriately manipulated, so to speak—Hebrew words, ideas, and idioms.

It is a singular phenomenon in controversy that Protestants argue as if the Roman Church alone celebrated Mass in a dead language. They best know why they preserve so discreet a silence as to the fact that all the Greeks and Orientals adopt precisely the same custom.

## PART II.

### TRANSUBSTANTIATION AND THE SCRIPTURE.

*Bellarmino, Fisher, Scotus.*

‘A PROTESTANT’ makes a most misleading assertion when he affirms that ‘Bellarmino, D’Ailly, Cajetan, Biel, and Fisher of Rochester all confess that the doctrine of Transubstantiation is not to be found in the Scriptures.’

My first observation on the above is that the term *confess* is applied to the writers thus enumerated in a most gratuitous and unwarranted manner, in order to insinuate that they are making reluctantly some unpleasant admission, as if they had been under the pressure of controversial assailants, who had extorted from them a confession which they would otherwise have willingly withheld. There is no foundation whatever for this inference. In the next place I would ask, what is the conclusion that most readers would draw from these words: ‘The doctrine of Transubstantiation is *not to be found in the Scriptures*’? Would it not be that the doctrine is not discoverable in the Scriptures duly interpreted; that it is not their sense, and has no support from the written Word of God?

How far this is a correct view of Bellarmine shall now be seen.

The very heading of the nineteenth chapter of his third book on the Eucharist demonstrates the exact opposite of the allegation of ‘A Protestant.’ It runs thus: ‘*Transubstantiation is proved from the Word of*

*God.* His first argument is 'from those words of the Lord, "Take ye, and eat; for this is My body" (Matt. xxvi. 26); and in reference to the words, 'this is My body,' he declares that 'Transubstantiation can be *absolutely* inferred from the words of the Lord,' and that 'whatever may be the case with metaphysical subtleties, they signify, in the common mode of understanding, that there is nothing under the species but the body of the Lord.' The only shadow of anything in support of the statement of 'A Protestant' is this concluding remark: 'Add, that even should there be any obscurity or ambiguity in the words of the Lord, that has been taken away by many councils of the Church and by the consent of the Fathers.' And this possible obscurity—for Bellarmine only states it as an hypothesis, he having, as we have just seen, affirmed that it was absolutely to be gathered from the words of the Lord—is exaggerated into the proposition that Transubstantiation is *not to be found* in the Scriptures!

'A Protestant' cites Bellarmine to prove that Scotus held that Transubstantiation was not an article of faith until the Lateran Council in 1215. But he omits to inform us what Bellarmine's explanation of this fact is: Scotus 'said *that* because he had not read the Roman Council under Gregory VII., in 1079, nor the consent of Fathers, which we have adduced above,' viz. in the preceding chapter to the one referred to by 'A Protestant' (lib. iii. De Euch. c. xxiii.).

But although Scotus did not believe that Transubstantiation was an article of faith before the Lateran Council, it is absolutely certain that he classed it as having always belonged to the substance of revelation. This is proved by his own explicit statement: 'I affirm that in the Eucharist there is truly the body of Christ,

and every assertion to the contrary is a manifest error, because from the beginning of the faith it *was of the substance of faith* that the body of Christ is contained under those *species*. I also hold that the substance of bread does not remain, but that it is transubstantiated into the body of Christ. The substance of bread ceases to be there by virtue of the conversion, and its cessation of existence is its conversion into the body of Christ' (lib. iv. dist. xi. quæst. 3).

Bellarmino makes the following declaration about Scotus in regard to the proof of Transubstantiation from Scripture, upon which, however, 'A Protestant' is silent. 'Scotus says that there is no place in Scripture so express as *evidently to compel* a person, without the declaration of the Church, to admit Transubstantiation; and that is not altogether improbable. For although Scripture, which we have already brought forward, seems to us so clear that it is able to compel any one who is not perverse, nevertheless it may be deservedly doubted, since most learned and acute men, and Scotus preëminently so, hold the contrary opinion. He (Scotus) adds that since the Catholic Church has in a General Council declared the Scripture, Transubstantiation is manifestly proved from Scripture thus declared. For that cannot but be the true sense of Scripture which He delivers Who composed the Scripture. This, indeed, is no other than the Holy Spirit, Who also dictated the Scripture to the Apostles and Prophets, and Who has declared it through the Church' (Bell. *ibid.*).

As no references are given to any passages from the writings of Cardinal D'Ailly or Cardinal Cajetan which are supposed by 'A Protestant' to prove his assertion that 'Transubstantiation is not to be found in Scripture,' I pass these authors by, though it is highly probable

that they mean no more than what Bellarmine says, namely, that Scripture is not so irresistibly explicit as to force a person to admit Transubstantiation, independently of the interpretation of the Church and Fathers. Gabriel Biel, who died in 1495, and is another theologian cited as a witness by 'A Protestant,' only states that the conversion of the substance of the bread and wine 'is not found *expressed* in the canon of Scripture,' a statement which is no difficulty whatever to any Catholic. Cardinal D'Ailly, who died in 1425, is a name of no authority, whatever he may have written; he even thought that, 'as far as he could see,' the Council of Lateran had not determined in an evident manner the doctrine of Transubstantiation; and the illustrious Vasquez describes him as 'a theologian among the Nominalistic Scholastics, without distinction and erudition' (Harper's 'Peace through the Truth,' part i. p. 190).

Fortunately 'A Protestant' has given a reference to another writer, the noble Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, who was martyred under Henry VIII. The indictment against Fisher affirmed that he had uttered these words: 'The kynge, oure sovereign lord, is not supreme hedd yn erthe of the cherche of Englande.' When Fisher heard the news that the Pope had made him cardinal at the last creation, he is reported to have said that 'if the hat were lying at his feet he would not stoop to take it up,' so little did he set store by it. Henry, on the other hand, is reported to have exclaimed, 'Paul may send him the hat, but I will take care that he have never a head to wear it on.' 'The bishop was beheaded June 22, 1535. The head was placed on London Bridge, but the trunk, despoiled of the garments, the perquisite of the executioner, lay naked on the spot till evening, when it was carried away by the



guards and deposited in the churchyard of Allhallows, Barking' (Lingard, Hist. Eng. vol. v. p. 40-42).

The passage quoted from Fisher is taken from a reply which he wrote to a work of Luther, published in 1520, and entitled 'The Babylonish Captivity.' The answer of the bishop is in Latin, and is entitled 'Defensio Assertionum Regis Angliæ de Fide Catholicâ adversus Lutheri "Captivitatem Babyloniam."' The words are taken from the tenth chapter, and are as follows: 'There is not here' (*i.e.* in the account of the institution of the Eucharist in the Gospel) 'a single word by which it can be proved that in our own Mass there is the true presence of the Body and Blood of Christ.' In order to understand the exact meaning of this passage it will be necessary to state briefly the particular point which Bishop Fisher was endeavouring to impress upon his readers; for this will be found to be the key to the extract just quoted.

The heading of the chapter will explain what was in the author's mind. It runs thus: 'We must believe that interpretation concerning the Scriptures which the Fathers have unanimously left.' His especial object is to insist on the importance of adhering to the ancient tradition of the Fathers, and especially of obeying the Church, as being preserved from all error by the Holy Ghost. He says that Scripture, taken by itself, can be twisted any way by contentious individuals; and speaking of *our* Mass, he remarks 'that it cannot be proved from the *bare words* of Scripture that any priest can consecrate *in these days* the true Flesh and Blood of Christ.' His argument is plain enough, namely, that there is no *word* in the scriptural passage recording the institution of the Eucharist in the Gospel which, *by itself*, can demonstrate that in the Mass consecrated by

Catholic priests in the sixteenth century, in which he lived, there is the true Body of Christ. Undoubtedly; and what Catholic theologian would ever affirm the contrary? But the impression which would be naturally conveyed by the quotation, as given by 'A Protestant'—given without any context—would certainly be that the doctrine of the Real Presence was *not in Scripture at all*. Whereas Bishop Fisher, as we shall see, only meant to say that the proof of the doctrine of the Mass did not depend *so much* on the letter of the Gospel as on the traditionary belief of the Fathers, who interpreted Scripture under the guidance of the Spirit.

The following extracts from the same chapter referred to will, I think, amply confirm my statement:

'First let us teach that *without the interpretation of the Fathers*, and their usage handed down by them to us, no one will prove from the naked words themselves of the Gospel (*ipsis nudis Evangelii verbis*) that any priest in these days (*his temporibus*) consecrates the true Flesh and Blood of Christ. Not that this thing is indeed doubtful, but that its certainty is not derived *so much* from the words of the Gospel *as from* the interpretation of the Fathers, and also at the same time from the usage of so long a period, which they have left to posterity. For every one must be convinced, who is not ignorant of the Gospel, that the Holy Ghost, who was given to the Church as her perpetual teacher, would never have allowed her to err in a matter of such great weight, during such a protracted succession of ages.'

'It is therefore manifest that the long usage and concordant interpretations of the Fathers—no one contradicting them—afford a *more solid certainty* as to how any obscure place of Scripture ought to be understood *than the bare words themselves*, which can be

variously twisted aside (*detorqueri*) by the disputations, according to each one's fancy.'

Again : ' Every one understands that the certainty of this thing [the Real Presence] does not depend so much upon the Gospel as upon the usage and custom which has been handed down by the very first Fathers through so many centuries. For thus has it seemed good to them, under the instruction of the Holy Ghost, to *interpret* for us this part of the Gospel. And they judged right so to act on the usage, in their own times, that whoever should wish now to introduce another meaning or usage, that man will go entirely contrary to the Holy Ghost, under whose inspiration (*instinctu*) the earlier Fathers handed down this rite and ceremony in the consecration of the Eucharist.'

When the sentence quoted by ' A Protestant ' is read in this its own context, and not by itself as an isolated passage, it will not be easily misunderstood : ' Neither is there any word placed here [referring to the Gospel record of the Eucharist] by which it is proved that there is *in our Mass* the true presence of the Flesh and Blood of Christ.' Fisher never intended to deny that the doctrine was *contained* in Scripture, but to deny that you could prove solely *by any explicit word* in the account of the institution of the Eucharist (apart from the interpretation of the Gospel by the Church) the consecration of the Body and Blood of Christ in the days in which he lived.

If any further proof were required to show that Fisher believed that the doctrine *was* contained in the Scriptures, we have only to look at his work ' *De Veritate Corporis Christi* ' (The Truth of the Body of Christ) written against Œcolampadius. He there charges Œcolampadius with opposing ' *such plain (apertas) and*

evident Scriptures, as well as the testimony of the Fathers' (lib. xi. c. v.). He reproves him for 'not believing the *plainest* (*apertissimis*) words of Jesus' (lib. i. c. i.); and, to quote no more, he says of Transubstantiation, 'Christ testifies to this very thing *in His own words*, affirming that this is His Body' (lib. i. c. iv.).

Impartial judges will be now able to form an opinion as to the groundless assertion that Bellarmine and Fisher confessed that Transubstantiation was not to be found in the Scriptures.

#### TRANSUBSTANTIATION AND THE CATECHISM OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT.

It is a serious misstatement of the Catholic doctrine to say that, according to the Catechism of the Council of Trent, the 'wafer and wine' are transubstantiated into the *Soul and Divinity* as well as into the Body and Blood of Christ. The Catechism teaches that Christ in His entire nature, human and divine, is present under the *species* of bread and wine, because of the natural conjunction of the soul with the body, and of the indivisible union of the person of the Godhead with the sacred Humanity; but it is nowhere asserted that the substance of the bread or wine is changed into the substance of the Soul and Godhead of Christ. The Catechism not only recognises the difference of mode and principle by which the Soul and Divinity of Christ are in the Eucharist as compared with His Body, but explicitly recommends the pastors of the Church to pay attention to (*animadvertant*) the distinction (pars ii. cap. iv. quæst. xxxii.).

In the words of the Council of Trent, 'there takes place by the consecration of the bread and wine a con-

version of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the Body of Christ our Lord, and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of His Blood, which conversion has been conveniently and properly called by the Holy Catholic Church—Transubstantiation' (Sessio xiii. c. iv.). The word 'Transubstantiation,' therefore, applies only to the change of one *material* substance into another. 'I confess,' said Berengarius, after being condemned by a Roman Council in 1079, 'that the bread and wine are substantially converted into the true, proper, and life-giving *Flesh and Blood* of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that after consecration there is the true Body of Christ which was born of the Virgin, and which, having been offered for the salvation of the world, hung on the Cross; which also is sitting at the right hand of the Father.' With regard to the relation subsisting between the Body of Christ thus made present by Transubstantiation, and His Soul and Divinity, the Council of Trent teaches that the Soul of Christ is present under the *species* of bread and under the *species* of wine, 'by the power of that natural connection and concomitance by which the parts of Christ our Lord, Who has already risen from the dead and will die no more, are linked together (*copulantur*); moreover, that the Divinity is present on account of Its marvellous hypostatic union with the Soul and Body' (Sessio xiii. cap. iii.).

As 'A Protestant' has referred to the Catechism of the Council of Trent, it would have been well if he had remembered the following admonition in regard to this sublime mystery, upon whose holy ground he treads with such a random, irreverent, and hostile foot: 'The faithful are to be charged that they do not inquire too curiously in what manner that change takes place; for

neither can it be perceived by us, nor have we any example of such a thing in natural changes, nor in creation itself. But *what this is* must be known by faith; *how it becomes* what it is must not be too curiously investigated' (pars ii. cap. ii. quæst. xli.).

'The divine mysteries,' says the Vatican Council, 'by their own nature so far transcend the created intellect, that even when delivered by revelation and received by faith, they remain covered with the veil of faith itself, and enveloped, as it were, in a certain mist, so long as we are pilgrims in this mortal life apart from God; for we "walk by faith and not by sight"' (Const. Dogm. De Fide, cap. iv.).

#### ABSOLUTION AND CONTRITION.

*The Council of Trent, S. Alphonsus de Liguori, Cardinal Wiseman.*

I am challenged to 'reconcile the conflicting statements' of the Council of Trent about absolution and contrition with those of S. Alphonsus de Liguori and the late Cardinal Wiseman. The grand dilemma which 'A Protestant' proposes as a crucial difficulty for me is the concoction of his own fancy, 'combined with a singular ignorance, if not deliberate perversion, of the language of the Council, the Saint and the Cardinal. If he had really read the whole text of the Council of Trent relating to this question, which I doubt, he could not have honestly found the theological contradiction which he has converted into, what he imagines, an irresistible weapon of reasoning against the Catholic Church. If he *has* read it, then his dulness is marvellous.

The following is the case, stated in his own words :

'The Church of Rome declares, on pain of damna-

tion, that the absolution of her priests is "a judicial act, and not a bare ministry of pronouncing and declaring sins to be remitted" (Council of Trent, session xiv. canon ix.) ; whereas S. Liguori teaches that *with contrition*, or perfect sorrow for sin, the priest's absolution is, as Luther taught, "a simple declaration of the absolution already granted" by God (Tract on Sacraments). Again; Cardinal Wiseman declares (Lectures on the Church, vol. ii. p. 9) that the only case where the priest's absolution "has the slightest worth or avail in the sight of God" is where there is true contrition in the penitent; and if the penitent obtain absolution without this contrition "he commits an enormous sacrilege." Therefore, on these principles, it follows—in the only case where the priest's absolution is of the least avail—the absolution is *declarative only*, and *not judicial*.'

The argument, then, is that Cardinal Wiseman and S. Alphonsus both teach that contrition is necessary for the forgiveness of sins ; moreover, S. Alphonsus says that where contrition exists, forgiveness takes place even before the priest's absolution ; therefore, where there has been contrition, the absolution which is given is not judicial, but merely declaratory, according to the Protestant idea ! Cardinal Wiseman says that contrition must always precede absolution, if the absolution is not to be worthless ; but S. Alphonsus has declared, that contrition effects forgiveness of sins without the coöperation of absolution ; assuming, therefore, that his opinion and that of the Cardinal are the same with regard to contrition, both of them teach that absolution is only a declaratory act, and not judicial ; it can absolve nothing, since after contrition nothing remains to be absolved.

Next, if S. Alphonsus and Cardinal Wiseman teach that absolution is only declaratory, how are they to be reconciled with the explicit statement of the Council of Trent, that sacerdotal absolution is *not* declaratory but judicial?

The whole of this imaginary difficulty arises from a misunderstanding of the word *contrition*, and from the use of two words, as if identical in meaning, which are in reality quite distinct in their ecclesiastical signification—the words *true* and *perfect*.

By the word ‘contrition,’ as used in the instance cited by ‘A Protestant,’ S. Alphonsus means not contrition in general, or as it is popularly understood, apart from theology, but one particular kind of sorrow familiar to all well-educated Catholics under the special name of *perfect* contrition. That he is alluding to this kind of sorrow is clear from the very words ‘contrition or *perfect* sorrow.’ Cardinal Wiseman, on the contrary, in that part of his lecture quoted by ‘A Protestant’ is merely asserting the absolute necessity of ‘deep and earnest sorrow,’ as a condition without which God will not forgive sins under the New Law, as He also never did under the Old. So far, therefore, as the need of contrition is an indispensable requisite for the pardon of sins, he and S. Alphonsus are both unanimous. As God Himself cannot forgive an impenitent sinner, neither of course can the priest, who can only absolve according to the laws of God’s covenant, and who, according to S. Thomas Aquinas, is ‘a living instrument of God.’ ‘God alone remits sin by His own authority; baptism acts through the power of God instrumentally, as an inanimate instrument; and the priest as an animated instrument, and therefore as a minister’ (Suppl. iii. par. quæ. xviii. art. i.). In order to receive pardon



through the absolution of the priest, a certain preparation of mind is necessary on the part of the penitent. 'Grace,' says S. Thomas, 'is never given *through* the Sacrament of Penance, unless preparation exists at the moment, or has existed previously; and of this preparation deep and earnest sorrow is the most important element.' Hence Cardinal Wiseman, who is contemplating the case of persons who 'ask for or obtain absolution,' declares that, if they do this—of course knowingly and without the necessary sorrow—they will not merely receive no benefit from the absolution, but will 'commit an enormous sacrilege.'

He does not however mean by 'deep and earnest contrition' (or true contrition, as 'A Protestant' incorrectly quotes him) the '*perfect* sorrow' of which S. Alphonsus is speaking, but a sorrow which shall be sufficient in its sincerity and supernatural motives to enable the penitent to receive efficaciously the sacerdotal absolution. This sufficient sorrow is well known by Catholics under the name of *imperfect contrition*, or *attrition*. Where there neither is, nor has been, this contrition in the soul of a sinner, absolution 'is worthless and of no avail,' as the Cardinal states. It is another question entirely whether, in the case of a contrition experienced previous to absolution—and which contrition is, in the technical and ecclesiastical sense of the term, '*perfect*'—the grace of pardon is or is not given by God directly, and *prior* to the sacramental absolution. Here Cardinal Wiseman is in complete accord with S. Alphonsus, for he says that, in the case of such a penitent, 'an act of contrition, including a willingness, if in his power, to practise confession, because it is an institution established by Christ for the forgiveness of sins, will *of itself* procure their pardon,

and reconcile him as completely to God as if he had confessed all his crimes and received absolution' (Lecture x.).

The statement that a certain kind of sorrow is prerequisite *whenever* the absolution of the priest produces forgiveness is quite consistent with another statement, namely, that there *is* a sorrow so perfect that the soul is pardoned invisibly by God, even before the priest's absolution is actually imparted.

I now proceed to show that there is neither any self-contradiction in the words of the Council of Trent; nor between it and S. Alphonsus and Cardinal Wiseman. All hold that absolution is a judicial act, and that although God forgives sin in the case of perfect contrition before the absolving act takes place, yet there is always a certain kind of relation between the two conditions in order that the forgiveness may be accomplished. Contrition, when used in a general sense, is a 'grief of mind and detestation in regard to sin that has been committed, with a resolution not to commit any more sin' (Conc. Trid. sess. xiv. cap. iv.). But the Council distinguishes contrition into perfect and imperfect, the latter being called technically *attrition*. It declares that perfect contrition 'reconciles man to God, *before* this Sacrament [of Penance] is *actually* received; that is, before the external act of absolution has been applied by the priest in the sacrament to the penitent, who is hypothetically considered as already perfectly contrite. 'Nevertheless, that reconciliation is not to be ascribed to that contrition *without the intention (votum)* of receiving the Sacrament' of Penance. It is, consequently, of the essence of this kind of contrition that one element in it should be an intention, explicit or implicit, on the part of the penitent to have recourse, when able, to the sacramental absolution of the priest.

The power of the Keys is distinctly recognised as having an important office in this reconciliation, inasmuch as God will not forgive such penitents unless they intend to submit themselves to its action when the opportunity arrives. In such a case the virtue of the Keys, according to S. Thomas, 'operates as existing in the intention' (Suppl. quæst. xviii. art. i.). There is, therefore, a moral connection between the above forgiveness of sins and the absolving power in the Church, both on the part of God Who is the supreme source and cause of forgiveness, and on the part of the perfectly contrite penitent. The Church teaches precisely a similar doctrine about baptism, for she holds that where a person is properly disposed for that sacrament, and intends, explicitly or implicitly, to receive it, the grace of regeneration is imparted by God, so that if such a person died without the visible baptism by water, and this omission was not through his own fault, he would die a living member of Jesus Christ; he would thus have received by anticipation that grace of regeneration which is ordinarily conferred only through the outward sacrament. This direct action, however, of God does not change the nature of the Sacrament of Baptism which He Himself has instituted as a visible channel of grace; nor does the acknowledgment by the Catholic Church of such a doctrine as 'baptism in *desire*' prove her to be inconsistent in declaring the general necessity of baptism by *water*. The Church can be plausibly alleged to be inconsistent only by suppressing some portion of her doctrine which is necessary to its integrity.

So clear is her teaching about the efficacy of perfect contrition before sacramental absolution, that when Michael Baius affirmed that 'by contrition, even if

perfected by love, and united with the desire of receiving the Sacrament [of Penance], sin is not remitted (except in the case of necessity or martyrdom) without the actual reception of the sacrament,' that proposition was condemned by Pius V. in 1567, by Gregory XIII. in 1579, and by Urban VIII. in 1641. Upon this point S. Alphonsus, together with all Catholics, is in complete accordance with the universal teaching of the Church.

Before I leave the subject of perfect contrition it may be useful to explain that it is called *perfect* on account of the perfection of the *motive* from which it springs. The sorrow in perfect contrition is that highest sorrow of all which is caused by the highest kind of love which the soul can entertain towards God, that affection, namely, which loves God exclusively on account of His own infinite goodness, as One to be loved supremely and above all things, without reference, *as a motive*, to any *particular* form of that goodness, as, for example, His goodness towards ourselves. Perfect contrition is that grief, indignation, and detestation of sin which, arising out of the love of God, is experienced on account of the offence committed by the sinner against God, considered as infinitely good in the perfection of all His attributes. It is perfect also because it is so admirable in motive and in the quality of the love from which it springs, that it disposes the soul immediately for justification, even without the Sacrament of Penance. It is such as to completely pulverise (*contero*) sin, so that nothing more of it remains as a cause of penalty against the sinner.

The second kind of contrition is called *imperfect* because of the inferiority of its motive as compared with the first. It is, like the first, a sorrow for and detestation of sin, together with a firm resolution not

to sin again ; but it arises chiefly from the consideration of the turpitude of sin, the fear of hell, or of other evils which are regarded as penalties which may be inflicted upon the offender by the providential chastisement of God. Its essential motive therefore is not that kind of love of God which has been described as the characteristic of perfect contrition ; it is called *attrition* because it bruises (*atterit*) sin rather than entirely pulverises it, and cannot, like perfect contrition, justify immediately, nor apart from the Sacrament of Penance. The Council of Trent declares, moreover, that it is 'a real gift of God and an impulse of the Holy Ghost, not indeed as yet inhabiting [the soul], but only moving it, by which the penitent being assisted prepares the way to himself for righteousness. And although it cannot of itself bring the sinner to justification, nevertheless it disposes him to obtain the grace of God in the Sacrament of Penance' (Sess. xiv. cap. iv.).

The same Catholic Church that has distinguished so clearly between the two kinds of contrition also taught, at the same Council of Trent, as follows, with regard to the nature of the priest's absolution :

The Council affirms (1) that priests by *virtue of the Holy Ghost*, conferred upon them in ordination, exercise the function of remitting sins, *as the ministers of Christ* ; (2) that the absolution of the priest is the dispensation of a gift ; (3) that this gift is *not their own* ; (4) that this dispensation of a gift which comes from another (*alieni beneficii dispensatio*) is not '*solely a bare ministration, either of announcing the Gospel or of declaring that sins have been remitted, but that it resembles a judicial act, by which sentence is pronounced by himself as if by a judge*' (Sess. xiv. cap. vi.)

The absolving act, then, is always judicial, and it always effects its object, namely, the remission of sins, *whenever, besides the due disposition of soul, there is a sufficient material*, so to speak, for the application of the sacramental virtue. If the ministration of the priest were, in its own nature, *only* a preaching, a mere declaration, though official, of a past fact, viz. that the sins of the penitent had been already forgiven, then it would *never* be judicial and *never* productive of forgiveness of sin.

Where a sinner is sufficiently disposed by genuine or supernatural sorrow for the operation of the sacrament, but has not perfect contrition, the absolution actually conveys to his soul grace and pardon of his sins from God, which pardon and grace could not have been imparted without the sacerdotal absolution. Where, on the other hand, a sinner already contrite with perfect contrition—a state that can be known with certainty only by God Himself—comes under the external action of the absolving sacrament, then undoubtedly no absolution of sins takes place, for the self-evident reason that the impediment to forgiveness had been removed by God Himself, previously to the administration of the sacrament by His priest. The Keys do not in this case open the door of pardon, simply because it was already opened before they came into exercise; still they do not, for that reason, cease to be Keys. If a subordinate judge formally remits a penalty which has, without his knowledge, been already remitted by his superior, the act of the subordinate judge does not lose thereby its official character. So the absolution, in the case supposed, does not lose its original and intrinsic nature as a judicial act, although in a particular instance its practical effect is not the same as in the case

of a person who, not being perfectly contrite before the absolution, has therefore not been already forgiven by God. Besides, it is the common opinion of theologians that grace of *some* kind accompanies the exercise of the Keys in the case of previous perfect contrition, so that the absolution is never wholly sterile.

To call the administration of absolution, in the case of perfect contrition, declaratory only is to misrepresent the Catholic doctrine, which means by 'declaratory' that which is never capable under any circumstances of actually *conveying* the pardon of sins, and never was instituted by Christ for that purpose.

Moreover, as I have stated, perfect contrition *includes* in its definition the intention on the part of the penitent of having recourse to the absolution of the priest, and thus there is a real link between the penitent's pardon and the future actual administration of the sacrament. If it be asked, why is it necessary to go to the priest for absolution if this can be obtained from God without it? the answer is plain: (1) because perfect contrition is not so easily discernible in its evidences that either penitent or priest can be sure of its presence in a soul; and (2) because, although God can impart His forgiveness and sanctifying grace previously to the administration of His own sacrament, He does not therefore dispense the members of His Church from their obligation to obey His ordinary laws, one of which is that the commission to remit and retain sins is vested in His priests, thus entailing a correlative duty on the part of sinners to submit themselves to that tribunal. There is no inconsistency in the words of the Council of Trent, for it has explained clearly the result of perfect contrition in the soul, as also the necessity of imperfect contrition or attrition, in order that the grace

of reconciliation with God may be obtained through the absolution of the priest in the Sacrament of Penance.

S. Alphonsus de Liguori is in exact accordance with the Council of Trent; otherwise, he would not be a canonised saint, but a heretic; neither is there the slightest shadow of a sign in his works that he held absolution to be 'declaratory, and not judicial.' Two quotations will be sufficient to show the baseless audacity of such an insinuation. He defines penance as a 'sacrament consisting in the acts of a penitent and of a priest *legitimately absolving after the manner of a judgment (in modum judicii)*' (De Pœn. De Quæst. circa Dolorem); and his classification of the duties of a confessor is divided into (1) that of father, (2) of physician, (3) of teacher, and (4) of judge. An entire section is devoted to an exposition of the qualities required for the due discharge of the priest's duty in the last-named capacity, its very first words commencing thus: 'The office of a confessor is that of a judge' (*Praxis confessorum*).

As for the late Cardinal Wiseman, he was, as I have observed before, engaged not so much with the question of perfect contrition prior to the Sacrament of Penance, as with the necessity for genuine sorrow on the part of a penitent seeking for absolution *in* that sacrament.

Thus, when theological terms are explained, when the necessary distinction is made between the two species of contrition, and when the language of the Council, the Saint, and the Cardinal is assigned to its proper subjects, the alleged contradiction between them vanishes into nonentity, leaving behind in its trail nothing but a striking evidence of the mental obliquity of its inventor.



**THE ROMAN FORM OF ABSOLUTION.**

'A Protestant' assails the Catholic Church on the ground that she now declares the essence of the form of Absolution to lie in the direct mode of expression, 'I absolve thee,' whereas the original form that was in use in the Catholic Church for more than a thousand years was not direct, but precative. According to him the Church has not only changed the ancient form, but has altered her doctrine, in proof of which he asserts that the precative form signified that the absolution was only a supplication of the priest to God that *He* would forgive the penitent, and not a judicial act professing that the priest actually forgave sins in the name of God.

The change from the indirect to the direct form of words is an historical fact, which proves that the Church made at a certain period an alteration in her directions as to the administration of the Sacrament of Penance, but it is no evidence of any change in her doctrine about the nature of Absolution. The mere grammatical difference in the words is no mark of a transition from one doctrine to another fundamentally opposite : if there had been such a doctrinal diversity it must have been of a most fundamental character, and there would have been some signs in history of such an important controversy ; yet not only is this indication absent, but there is no certainty even as to the date of the change in the words. The precative form seems to have disappeared gradually under the increasing predominance of the direct form, until legislation finally fixed the direct form as the one to be exclusively used and held as valid in the whole Church in the West. Throughout

the entire period, before and after this change, the Fathers of East and West have invariably taught the same doctrine—namely, that Christ gave a judicial power to His ministers.

The very fact that the Orientals still use the precativ form, and yet teach precisely the same doctrine as the Westerns, added to another fact, namely, that this subject has never been a matter of controversy between East and West, shows decisively that no argument can be drawn in favour of the non-judicial character of Absolution from the mere *indirectness* of the sacramental form. An illustration of how little can be settled in theological points from grammar alone is suggested by our Lord's words to Mary Magdalene, 'Thy sins *are* forgiven thee' (Luke vii. 48): it is certain that Christ Himself forgave her; 'Who is this,' inquired the bystanders, 'that forgiveth sins?' and yet the words themselves only state the *fact* that she had been forgiven. Amongst the Orientals the baptismal form literally asserts only a fact: 'N——, the servant of God, *is* baptised;' yet who doubts that the baptiser means the same as those who say, 'I *baptise* thee'? Even the precativ forms of Absolution amongst the Orientals are in most of their rituals accompanied by that part of the Gospel narrative which records the positive commission of Christ to His Apostles: 'Whose sins you shall forgive,' &c. (John xx. 23). As an illustration of the same general principle it may be observed also that in the administration of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, whereas the ordinary form in the Roman ritual is expressed in the precativ mode, 'through this holy unction, and through His most tender mercy, may the Lord pardon thee,' &c., the Ambrosian ritual has the direct form: 'I anoint thee with sanctified oil, in

the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,' although this is accompanied by other words of a deprecatory nature.

There is in the Latin form of Absolution a distinct recognition that the priest acts not in his own right when he absolves, but as a 'dispenser of the mysteries of God' (1 Cor. iv. 1); and although the judicial words alone are the essential part of the act, they are preceded by a prayer implying that the principal absolver is Christ Himself: '*May our Lord Jesus Christ absolve thee; and I by His authority absolve thee from every bond of excommunication, suspension [omitted in the case of laics], and interdict, as far as I am able and thou needest; I absolve thee from thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.*'

In the Oriental forms there are slight variations; sometimes the words are, 'may God absolve thee through me,' and sometimes only, 'may God absolve thee,' the additional 'through me' being omitted, as is the case in their baptismal forms. Language, especially that of a technical and official character, must be interpreted according to the intention and doctrine of those who use it, for if separated from this connection it will often only mislead, instead of conveying its true meaning.

If indeed the grammatical collocation of words is to be the sole guide to the interpretation of theology, then those clergymen of the Church of England who hold that all absolution is declaratory and precative will be in a dilemma, for the form in the Visitation of the Sick runs thus: '*I absolve thee from all thy sins;*' and the absolution is declared to be by *the authority of Christ*. Yet they have no scruple about affixing an indirect sense to these very direct words.

That in the judgment of the Catholic Church the precativè form does not in itself imply that Absolution is only a supplicatory act is clear from her conduct towards those Orientals who are in communion with herself. There is no possibility of communion with the body of the Church without identity of doctrine and sacraments. As therefore those Orientals who are in union with the See of Rome are allowed still to use amongst themselves their own indirect form of Absolution, it is manifest that this difference of custom does not involve any difference of doctrine. But although the indirect form is valid for the Orientals, it is not valid for the Latins on account of a special legislation to that effect.

In 1595 Clement VIII., by a Bull, enjoined that if Greek priests in case of need absolved Latin priests, they were to use the direct form, but might add, if they liked, their own indirect form afterwards; but Greeks who absolve Greeks were not interfered with in their own usage.

The right to make laws of this kind belongs to the prerogative of that Church which Christ has invested with His own authority, and in which He ever dwells and acts as the Head, although invisibly. Where neither Christ nor His Apostles have promulgated any *exclusive form* of sacerdotal Absolution, it rests with the Catholic Church to settle that form according to her own wisdom and authority; and if she chooses to declare a certain form invalid, after a promulgation to that effect, the form having been valid before until a decree to the contrary—such a change is perfectly within the sphere of the legislative rights of that Church of God which can ‘bind and loose’ in the person and name of Christ.

The Catholic Church is no more inconsistent when

she alters her own disciplinary laws in matters upon which Christ has left no specific and exclusive command than is the State inconsistent when, by Act of Crown or Parliament, it makes null and invalid what was perfectly valid and legal prior to its more recent decrees. The charge, therefore, of 'A Protestant' against the Catholic Church is worthless unless the Church possesses no authority at all within the spiritual sphere.

## REPLY TO 'CLERICUS.'

### CONFESSION :

- I. AN OBJECTION FROM SCRIPTURE.
- II. THE DOCTRINE OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

### PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD :

- I. PURGATORY.
- II. COMMEMORATION OF THE SAINTS.



## CONFESSION.

### I. AN OBJECTION FROM SCRIPTURE.

'CLERICUS' cites the words in S. James's Epistle, 'Confess therefore your sins one to another' (v. 16), as an argument disproving that confession ought to be made to priests to the exclusion of laymen. The following reasoning is supposed to be remarkably decisive: What, it is said, can be plainer than the words 'one to another'? They do not mention that the confession is to be restricted to any particular individual, but, on the contrary, it is to be mutual; and where a thing is mutual, exclusiveness of rights or obligations is denied. It is not my intention to go into any elaborate critical examination of the words of S. James; it is enough for my purpose to show that the expression 'one to another' by no means proves that sacramental confession is *not* to be restrictedly made, as we affirm it ought to be, to a particular class of authorised persons. Take a parallel instance: S. Peter says (according to the English Protestant version), '*All of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility*' (1, v. 5). Upon the same principle of argumentation which is adopted against Catholics in regard to confession, it ought to follow that every person has an equal right to be superior and subject in everything, and that no class can claim obedience as their exclusive due. Yet in the very same verse S. Peter explicitly assumes the exact opposite: '*Ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder;*' whilst



there is not a syllable about the elder submitting themselves in turn to the younger. In the Catholic version of the passage the text runs thus: 'Ye young men, be subject to the ancients, and do ye all insinuate humility one to another.' But as Protestants will naturally prefer their own version, I have a perfect right to press the argument against them in the manner above stated. If 'confess your sins one to another' is valid against us, so 'all of you be subject one to another' is valid against, not only the submission of young men to their elders, but of servants to masters (1 Peter ii. 18), of subjects to kings and governors (ibid. ii. 13, 14), of wives to their husbands (Ephes. v. 22), and of Christians in general to their prelates (Heb. xiii. 17).

If by confession S. James meant only a mutual acknowledgment of faults committed against our neighbours, without any reference to the sacramental forgiveness of sins by the power of the Keys, his words cannot be quoted *against* that confession which we affirm is to be made to priests; they do not, on that supposition, touch the point, one way or the other, in the least. Non-sacramental confession is not inconsistent with, nor does it supersede, nor render superfluous, still less does it exclude, the other kind of confession; both are recognised in the Catholic Church; and therefore to affirm the one is by no means equivalent to a denial of the other.

If the Apostle is alluding to sacramental confession, then, although the words taken by themselves do not *express* the Catholic doctrine, they certainly do not *contradict* it. If, as Catholics contend, confession for the purpose of absolution was a part of the Christian religion, and constantly in operation in the Church, those to whom S. James wrote would not require to be in-

formed of such an elementary rule as that they must apply for forgiveness to those who alone could impart it in the name of Christ; and if S. James meant to include both kinds of confession, the sacramental and non-sacramental, they would make the necessary distinction for themselves. Judging from the context it is highly probable, to say the least, that the Apostle is alluding to sacramental confession. He enjoins that in case of any man being sick he is to send for the priests of the Church (elders, Prot. vers.), and they are to pray over him and anoint him in the name of the Lord; now if *priests* are to pray over the sick man and to anoint him, and if, supposing 'he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him,' it would certainly be very remarkable should the next words, 'confess ye *therefore* your sins one to another,' have no reference whatever to priests. What is the object of the term *therefore*, unless it be to connect illatively the idea of confession with what is mentioned just before, namely, the important office of the priests in administering the holy unction, 'in the name of the Lord,' to the sick man. The force of the argument is also strengthened if it be recollected that our Lord said to the Apostles, 'Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them' (John xx. 23), and that this power was transmitted to their successors in the apostolic priesthood of the Church. Origen evidently considered that S. James meant confession to priests, for he speaks of the remission of sins, 'when the penitent is not ashamed to *declare his sin to the priest of the Lord*, and to seek a remedy, . . in which *that also is fulfilled* which the Apostle James says, "If any one is sick among you, let him call the priests of the Church,"' &c. (Hom. ii. in Levit. n. 4).

In discussions as to the meaning of words such as

'one another,' it is important to recollect S. Augustine's caution, that when the question is 'about understanding the Scriptures we ought to know that some things are prescribed to all persons in common, and other things to certain particular classes of persons' (De Doct. Christ. l. iii. c. xvii.). Where this distinction is not explicitly stated, but a general term is used, the proper distribution of the parts in this general term must be determined by the subject-matter, by collateral passages, by the circumstances of the case, the teaching of the Church and other elements which are presupposed by the inspired writer as present to the mind of his readers. Thus when it is said, 'tell the Church' (Matt. xviii. 17), S. Chrysostom explains that by the word 'Church' in this passage our Lord means the presidents or rulers of the Church (Hom. lx. al. lxi. in Matt.). We are baptised into 'one body,' but it does not follow from this that there are not different members with different offices in this body: S. Paul insists on this important distinction as necessary to be remembered (1 Cor. xii. 12-18). The faithful are to 'minister grace *one to another*' (1 Pet. iv. 10); and the 'manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man' (1 Cor. xii. 7); but the grace and the ministrations are diverse in different members of the Church: 'There are diversities of graces . . . and diversities of ministries' (4, 5). Thus all are 'stewards of the manifold grace of God,' but it would be a perversion of the Gospel to infer from that statement that the Apostles were not 'ministers of Christ and dispensers' (stewards, Prot. vers.) in a totally different sense from the ordinary members of the 'one body.' How words, which in themselves signify universality, are to be restricted in their actual meaning, may be also illustrated from S. Peter's language about the obedience to autho-

rity. Without drawing any distinction as to individual Christians, he says, 'Be ye subject, therefore, to *every human creature* [ordinance of man, Prot. vers.] for God's sake' (1 Pet. ii. 13). Taken by themselves these words would lead us to suppose that every human being, or, according to the Protestant translation—which is a commentary upon, rather than a literal translation of, *κρίσις*—every ordinance made by any man, must be obeyed by the disciples of Christ. But what the Apostle had in his mind when speaking of '*every human creature*' is clear from his own language; 'whether it be to the king as excelling, or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers.' S. Peter, therefore, was alluding to '*every human creature*' which had an official right to be obeyed as a superior according to the divine law: for 'so,' he says, 'is the will of God.' The passage expresses the same doctrine as S. Paul: 'Let every soul be subject to the higher powers, for there is no power but from God' (Rom. xiii. 1). If we did not possess the explanation by S. Peter of his own words, it might have been argued, as in fact it has been by the Anabaptists, that all distinctions of superior and subject were abolished by Christianity together with their consequent obligations.

If S. Peter used the word '*every*' to signify a special class of men having a special civil authority, why should not S. James have intended the expression '*one another*' to be also limited to a special class of men having a special ecclesiastical authority? The bare fact that S. Peter has written more fully upon *his* point is no proof that S. James did not intend to convey the meaning which has been suggested, merely because he did not enter into every detail about the confession of sins.

The text in S. James must be interpreted, not by

any meaning which *may* be extracted from it by the mere laws of grammatical construction, but in accordance with those general principles which should guide the interpretation of Scripture as a whole. In this particular instance we have a remarkable confirmation of what I am saying in S. Bernard's application of the disputed passage. He is refuting a supposed objection of a sinner to confess his sins to a priest: 'Thou sayest, It is enough for me to confess my sins to God alone, because the priest cannot absolve me from sins without Him. To which not I, but blessed James answers, saying, Confess one to another' (Meditations, c. ix.). S. Bernard thinks this passage decisive, for he quotes no other in this reply to the objector.

They who cite S. James against the Catholic doctrine are in the following difficulty: either the words 'one to another' mean a perfectly indiscriminate and mutual confession of sins, or they imply a definable limit and distinction.

Are our opponents prepared for the strict logical consequences of the former alternative? Do they mean to enjoin upon persons of all classes and ages to confess to each other: men to women, and women to men; parents to children, and children to parents; masters to servants, kings to subjects, and *vice versâ*? Where also is to be the boundary of the 'one' and the 'other'? To how many persons is confession of the same sins to be made? Is it to be limited to a family, or a city, or a nation, for all come under the term 'one another'? The Protestant hypothesis leads to manifest confusion and absurdity: nor will it avail to say that by confession S. James intends to allude *only* to offences committed by neighbour against neighbour, and not to sins of secret thought and desire, or to sins committed against

God directly. This would be a pure assumption unsupported by the context.

If this entirely indiscriminate confession be rejected, then a distinction must be made: a certain order must be admitted in the ideas and persons represented by the confession of 'one to another.' But what is this but to admit of the *principle* of limitation? and if this be once conceded, what becomes of the irrefragable argument against the Catholic doctrine? Our opponents will try in vain to prove from S. James that the limitation is *not* meant to be what we say it is—that restriction which designates the priest as the sole authorised receiver of sacramental confessions. Whatever may be the exact meaning of the words of S. James, one thing at all events is certain: the injunction for Christians to 'confess one to another' is antagonistic to the Protestant axiom, that confession to *God alone* is a complete fulfilment of the law of the Gospel of Christ, and that man need not confess his sins to his fellow-man, such an obligation being an unjust invasion of his Christian liberty. Scripture must never be invoked to prove that confession to a priest cannot ever be necessary on the ground that confession to God alone is sufficient; for S. James, even on the Protestant theory, prescribes confession from *man to man*: and this fact is fatal to any reasoning which implies that confession is to be made to God only.

## II. THE DOCTRINE OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

I now proceed to consider an argument against the Catholic doctrine which is attempted to be drawn, not from Scripture, but from the belief and practice of the Church in the early period of its existence.

'Clericus' ventures to make the following statements: (1) that confession was unknown in the earliest age of Christianity; (2) that it was not regarded by S. Chrysostom, S. Augustine, and S. Leo as a dogma 'of vital importance.'

Let us test the value of the above asseverations by an appeal to evidence. The period in which S. Irenæus lived will be admitted to be very early, since he had conversed with the martyr Polycarp, the disciple of S. John. 'I could tell,' he says, 'the place where the blessed Polycarp used to sit and talk, his goings out and comings in, the character of his life, the look he wore, the discourses he made to the people; how he used to relate his converse with John and with the rest who had seen the Lord, and to repeat their sayings' (Iren. ad Florin. ap. Euseb. v. 20). Now S. Irenæus records the fact that certain women who had been guilty of a scandalous crime 'confessed' their sin and 'returned to the Church of God;' they confessed their crime although it had been secretly committed, and 'returned' to the Church, *i.e.* were reconciled by penance (Hær. li. c. vi. n. 3). 'Whilst others,' he adds, 'being ashamed to do this, and in some manner secretly despairing within themselves of the life of God, have apostatised entirely, and some hang doubtful' (cap. xiii. n. 5-7). Why did not S. Irenæus tell them that it was a sad delusion to despair of salvation, since confession was 'not of vital importance, in short, not a dogma'? Because he had not been initiated, at that early age of the Gospel, in the new Protestant revelation. He had 'kept the faith' as it had come down from the Apostles and Polycarp, and by his silence he admitted that to despair of salvation was a true consequence of refusing to confess a mortal, although a secret, sin.

Tertullian was of the same belief when he denounced those sinners who declined to confess, and who therefore, according to his pithy judgment, 'cared more for their shame than for being saved. Is it better,' he asks, 'to be damned in secret than absolved openly?' And he is sarcastic upon the notion, 'that if we withdraw anything from the knowledge of men, we shall of course conceal it also from God' (De Pœnit.). This dilemma was, according to the theory of 'Clericus,' an entire misconception on the part of Tertullian.

What says Origen? 'There is a remission of sins through penitence when the sinner washeth his bed with tears;' and when he is not ashamed to declare his sin to a priest of the Lord, and *seek a remedy* (Hom. ii. in Levit.). Again, 'If we have revealed our sins, not *only* to God, but *also* to those who are able to heal our wounds and our sins, our sins will be blotted out by Him who says, "Behold, I will blot out thine iniquities as a cloud"' (Hom. vii. in Lucam).

S. Basil declares that 'it is *necessary* to disclose our sins to those to whom the dispensation of the divine mysteries is committed' (Regul. Brev. Tract.).

S. Cyprian speaks of those 'who, having sinned only once *in thought*' (he is referring to the thought of apostasy), 'confessed this, with much grief, to the priests of God, . . . seeking a healing remedy for their wounds, knowing that God is neither to be deceived nor mocked.' He exhorts men 'to confess whilst yet in the world, whilst confession can be admitted, and satisfaction and the pardon given by the priests are available with God.' So also he condemns those who 'represent penance as needless,' it being 'the only remedy left here;' and he denounces 'such persons as men who rashly trust to salvation against the terms of the Gospel' (De Lapsis).

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What is the irresistible conclusion of language like this? Evidently that without confession there is no remedy for sins, and if there is no remedy, what can be a more vital necessity than confession?

If confession was not well known to be a dogma in the earliest ages, it is singular that the Armenians, Copts, Ethiopians, Nestorians, and Monophysites who left the Catholic Church in the fifth century should have always retained this institution, as they undoubtedly did; the evidence of its divine obligation and apostolicity was too strong for them to resist.

I now come to the three specific and weighty authorities whom 'Clericus' summons, with more temerity than prudence, to support his side of the question.

What testimony, then, does S. Chrysostom give? He declares that 'it would be madness to despise a power *without which we cannot hope for any salvation.*' And what is that power which is thus essential to man's salvation? It is the commission to forgive sins, which, he teaches, is the divine prerogative of priests (De Sacerdot. lib. iii. n. 5). Again, he affirms that there is no healing of sins without confession, and that 'the Divine Goodness has so arranged that *this cannot be done* without the aid of His ministers' (Ep. lxxxii. al. xci.). 'The Lord . . . seeks but one thing from us, not to despair, but to abstain from sin and hasten to confession' (De Lazaro. Concio ii.). 'When we shall have been able in this present life to wash away our transgressions by means of confession, and to obtain pardon of them from the Lord, we shall go thither, pure from sin' (Hom. v. in Gen. n. 2).

S. Augustine. 'Thou fearest to confess, thou who canst not be concealed by not confessing; thou shalt be condemned after remaining silent; thou mightest be

liberated after having confessed' (in Ps. lxvi.). He compares the effect of confession to the resurrection of Lazarus: 'When he confesses, he *comes forth* from darkness to light; and when he has confessed, what is said to the minister? That which was said at the burial of Lazarus, "Loose him, and let him go"' (Tract. xxii. in Joan.). He charges the sinner to do penance in time: 'If thou doest true penance whilst in health, and thy last day come upon thee, *thou art safe*' (Serm. cccxciii.). 'Let no one say to himself, "Do it" (penance) "in secret; I do it before God; God—may He pardon me—knows that I do it in my heart."' Was it, then, said without a cause, *What ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven?* Are, then, the Keys given to the Church of God in vain? Do we make void the Gospel—the words of Christ? (Serm. cccxcii.)

S. Leo. 'The Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, delivered over this power to the rulers (*præpositis*) of His Church, that they might both give penance to those who confessed, and admit them when purified by confession to the fellowship of the sacraments through the door of reconciliation' (Ep. ad Theodorum, lxxxi.); and (in Ep. lxxxii.) he decrees that absolution be given to a person who is even insensible, if he has asked for it previously. Would S. Leo have written thus if he had not considered the doctrine to be of 'vital importance'? Confession was clearly held by him to be the condition of partaking of the sacraments; and as exclusion from the sacraments was tantamount, in the mind of the Church, to exclusion from salvation, therefore confession was held to be necessary to salvation.

The above passages from S. Chrysostom, S. Augustine, and S. Leo, the chosen authorities of 'Clericus,' are positive, plain, and indisputable evidence in favour of the

dogma defended by me, and against the position of my opponent. How, then, does he venture to appeal to them in support of what would be a direct contradiction to their statements? Because he finds in their writings the following language. S. Augustine says, 'What have I to do with *men*, that they should hear my confessions?' 'Clericus,' with a most inconvenient carelessness, does not give even a clue to the references; but there is no doubt whatever—to judge from other parts of his writings—that in the passage quoted he is alluding to the non-necessity of his publishing his sins to the world at large—to *men in general*; and that he does not for a moment intend to deny that he was bound to manifest his sins to a priest. As the priest acts *for God* and is bound to secrecy, it was not unusual to call confession to a priest confession *to God*. Anastasius Sinaita, for instance, in the sixth century, says, 'Confess thy sins to Christ *through the priest*' (De Sac. Synaxi). 'Clericus' next adduces the following from S. Chrysostom: 'I do not tell thee to appear in public, not to accuse thyself before others: . . . acknowledge thy sins before God' (Hom. xxxi. in Heb.). The words 'in public' and 'before others' explain, to any one acquainted with the ecclesiastical history of Constantinople about that period, that S. Chrysostom is alluding to an obligation formerly existing, but then no longer in force, of public confession, *i.e.* of confession to a priest *in public*. From the time of the Decian persecution, in the third century, to that of Nectarius, Patriarch of Constantinople, in the fourth, there had been a public penitentiary priest, who had the right to decide if certain sinners were to proclaim their crimes openly or not. But as this produced great scandal on one occasion, by revealing to all the city a crime involving a deacon of the Church,

and exposing the clergy to considerable obloquy, this particular tribunal was abolished by Nectarius. Hence S. Chrysostom, who was Patriarch of Constantinople when he wrote the above words, said, 'I do not tell you to discover your sins in the presence of men;' a humiliation which all penitents once were liable to be ordered to undergo. They were, however, still bound, as they had been before the office of public penitentiary was first established, to confess their sins *in secret* to a priest. This is certain from the historian Sozomen, who, writing only forty years after the abolition of the above office, says, in allusion to its severity, that 'it appeared a grievous burden to *compel* persons to publish their crimes, *as in a theatre*, with a multitude standing round' (Hist. Ecc. l. vii. c. xvi.). Confession was still necessary, but the yoke of general publicity was removed. The other expression, 'acknowledge thy sins to God,' does not exclude *secret* confession to a priest, which, as I have before remarked, was often technically described as confession to God, in contradistinction to a confession 'in presence of men.' 'Clericus' brings forward one more testimony from S. Leo. He informs us that Leo the Great, Bishop of Rome, A.D. 440, decided that 'private confession was sufficient for the cleansing of the conscience of offenders.' By 'private' of course 'Clericus' means a confession made to God alone, and therefore not sacramental or to a priest; for otherwise there would be no point whatever in his argument. There is a passage in the writings of S. Leo to which I have no doubt the observations of 'Clericus' refer, and where he unquestionably says that 'it will be sufficient if the guilt of consciences be declared by private (*secretâ*) confession.' This is precisely what 'Clericus' advances as the decision of that Father; but why does 'Clericus' abruptly stop at

these words? Why does he violate the integrity of the whole sentence? Why does he decapitate this decision of S. Leo, and deprive it of one of its essential members, without a symptom of warning to his readers of this unauthorised truncation? The reason is obvious: if he had moved a single step beyond the phrase 'private confession' he would have encountered two words that would have shattered at a blow his own argument and convicted him of the hollowness of his position. These two words are 'to priests alone' (*solis sacerdotibus*), which 'Clericus' silently excises from the so-called 'decision.' The passage reads thus: 'Let not the profession [of sins] be written in a record (*libello*) and publicly recited, since it will be sufficient for the guilt of consciences to be indicated to priests alone.' S. Leo is not speaking of the sufficiency of secret confession made to God, to the exclusion of confession to priests, but of the sufficiency of confessions made to priests in private, themselves and their penitents alone being present; in other words, he exempts the guilty from the necessity of exposing their crimes to the public ear. The passage occurs in a letter addressed to the Bishops of Campania, Samnium, and Picenum, and S. Leo gives the following reasons for his admonition: 'Although that fulness of faith seems to be laudable which leads men, through the fear of God, not to be ashamed before men, nevertheless, since some sins are of such a character that penitents fear to make them public, let such an unadvisable (*improbabilis*) custom be done away with, lest many should be deprived of the remedies of penance; whilst either they are ashamed or are afraid of their sins being disclosed to their enemies, by whom they might be smitten with a legal prosecution. That confession, therefore, is enough which is offered to God firstly, and then also to the priest,

who comes forward and intercedes for the crimes of the penitents. For then, indeed, many will be able to be induced to accept penance, if the guilt of the person who confessed be not published in the ears of the people' (Ep. clxviii., al. cxxx.).

I do not envy the feelings of 'Clericus,' whom I now leave hopelessly impaled upon a sword which he has unwittingly unsheathed as a weapon of attack upon the Catholic doctrine of Confession.

It will be seen from the above copious evidence of the Fathers what ground there is for stating that 'history shows that confession to a priest was not practised in the earlier ages of the Church.' That history must be of a very peculiar kind. It is singular that if the institution of Penance took place *after* the earlier times of Christianity, and the date be known, we have no account of any opposition to such a serious, startling, and humiliating law. This is a problem for philosophers. To introduce a new doctrine into the Christian world was impossible without raising a storm of protests and setting the machinery of Bishops and Councils and Popes in motion; but, above all things, to introduce *Confession*, and to persuade the whole Church to accept it, after never previously believing in its necessity nor admitting it into its system, must have required a stupendous miracle, of which no history with which I am acquainted, sacred or profane, gives even the most microscopic trace. As the separated Greeks as well as the Roman Church equally teach that Sacramental Penance is an institution of Christ and that Confession is of Divine obligation—no question ever having been raised on that doctrine—the coincidence points to a common and universal origin—the 'faith once given to the saints.'

## PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD.

### I. PURGATORY.

'CLERICUS' affirms that the doctrine of Purgatory was 'in its youth' in the fifth century; that S. Augustine says 'there is no middle place for any one,' and that he evidently writes in doubt as to the existence of purgatorial fires. Moreover 'Clericus' argues that to show that prayers for the dead were practised in the Church at an early period does not at all prove the doctrine of Purgatory, for that the one does not necessarily imply the other.

In support of his opinion that S. Augustine did not believe in Purgatory, 'Clericus' has brought forward a passage that has no bearing whatever on the subject. The statement 'there is no middle state' sounds very decisively dogmatic when standing by itself, and to those who know that S. Augustine prayed for his mother, S. Monica, it is rather startling. But its force vanishes at a touch when examined in its context. The citation to which 'Clericus' alludes is taken from the book 'De Peccatorum Meritis,' c. xxviii. s. 55. But what is the subject? Has it anything to do with the condition after death of those Christians who die in grace? Nothing. S. Augustine is writing against the Pelagian heretics, and shows that unless men are baptised and quickened into supernatural membership with Christ they cannot have eternal life; no baptism, no heaven. The Pelagians held there was a *final* middle place for some who were

not baptised, which state they called 'the kingdom of heaven.' S. Augustine therefore says 'there is *no middle* place for any one; for it is impossible for a person *not to be with the devil if he is not with Christ*.' In other words, not to be a baptised Christian is to be eternally lost.

Thus S. Augustine's argument against an eternal middle state for the unbaptised is deliberately transmuted by the unscrupulous avidity of controversy into an evidence against the temporary middle state of Purgatory for Christians who have died in the Lord! So also S. Augustine teaches that 'after the resurrection, and when the universal judgment has been made and finished, the two cities shall have their own boundaries or ends (*fines*): the one which is Christ's, and the other which is the devil's.' Then, he declares, 'the good will enjoy eternal happiness, and the bad will suffer everlasting death without the power of dying' (*Enchiridion*, c. cxi.). But in speaking of the dead *between death and the resurrection*, he says, although some go into rest and others into pain, 'it cannot be denied that the dead are relieved by the piety of the living, through the sacrifice of the Mediator, prayers, and alms' (c. cix.). Also, in his commentary on the sixty-fifth chapter of *Isaias*: 'The prayers of the Church or of good persons are heard in favour of those Christians who departed this life not so bad as to be deemed unworthy of mercy, nor so good as to be entitled to *immediate happiness*.' But S. Augustine, we are told, doubted whether purgatorial fires existed, and therefore he doubted what is now the Roman dogma about Purgatory; and thus it seems satisfactorily settled that the doctrine of Purgatory was in its youth in S. Augustine's days.

S. Augustine's hesitation, however, cannot be ad-



duced as an argument against the Roman dogma, unless it can be proved that *material fire* is part of the *essential idea* of Purgatory, as understood by the Roman Church and made obligatory on the faith of all Catholics. The real state of the case is this: S. Augustine denied that Christians who had the faith but did evil works, and so died, could be saved by 'certain pains of fire.' He denied, in short, that those who went to judgment in mortal sin would be temporarily purified by fire, and *thus* be saved. Next, S. Augustine was not sure that the words in S. Paul (1 Cor. iii. 13), 'saved by fire,' meant a *material fire* after death, nor whether there be such a fire at all. 'That some such thing takes place even after this life is not incredible, and whether this be the case may be inquired' (De Octo Dulc. Quæ.). 'This question of purgatorial pains must be deferred unto another time for its more careful treatment' (De Civ. Dei, l. xx. c. xxv.).

Yet the speculative hesitation of S. Augustine about the true interpretation of a text in S. Paul, and the exact nature of the purification that takes place after death, is actually cited as a weighty testimony against Purgatory! Is 'Clericus' aware that Purgatory, in its *essential idea* as a 'Romish dogma,' means only that those souls which have not satisfied the justice of God before death, are, after death, in a penal state, and are therefore detained for a time known to and fixed by God, until they are fitted to enter into the bliss of heaven? It is an article of faith that there *is* a Purgatory, and that the souls detained there are helped by the 'suffrages of the faithful, and most especially by the acceptable Sacrifice of the Altar' (Conc. Trent, sess. xxv.). These two elements comprise the whole doctrine, so far as it is of faith; and the Church, whilst decreeing these truths as

obligatory on all Catholics, has decided nothing, as a matter of faith, about such other theological questions as the nature of Purgatory: whether, *e.g.* it is a fixed place or rather a state than a place; of what kind its pains are—whether there is a fire, and if so, whether it is material or not; how long its duration is; and in what manner precisely the souls in Purgatory are profited by the Mass and prayers of the living; with other kindred speculations. S. Augustine at one time had not made up his mind upon two points, about which he was at liberty to form his own opinion; but for any one to cite this hesitation as a testimony against the very doctrine of Purgatory itself is a sign of ignorance or of recklessness in reasoning rather than of knowledge or logical perspicuity.

Bellarmino, writing in the seventeenth century (he died in 1621), says that although it is the common opinion of theologians that there is a true and proper fire, and of the same species with our own elemental fire, 'still it is not of faith; for it has never been defined by the Church' (lib. ii. De Purg. c. x.).

He also states that although at the Council of Florence the Greeks openly avowed that they did not teach that there was a fire in Purgatory, the Council made no allusion to fire in their decree on Purgatory, thus clearly showing that it was no article of faith.

S. Augustine recognised that there were amongst the dead those who were in a state of suffering of some kind or other, and also that they were relieved by the prayers of the living. Besides the passages I have formerly quoted there is the following: 'Some undergo *temporal punishments* in this life, some *after death*, and others both now and then. But not all who suffer after death are condemned to eternal flames. What is not

expiated in this life is remitted in the life to come, so that they escape eternal punishment' (De Civit. Dei, c. xxi). If expiation, temporal punishment, and the remission of it after death, to be followed by escaping eternal punishment—in other words, by eternal life—do not express the idea of the 'Romish dogma' of Purgatory, it would be difficult to find any terms that would. He teaches also that the oblation of the Sacrament of the Altar made for the dead is an '*act of propitiation for the imperfect*' and an '*act of thanksgiving*' for those who '*in their lives were very good,*' and who therefore were *not* imperfect when they died; that is, they were then fit for immediate entrance into heaven. How would the Sacrifice of the Altar profit the dead, unless they were conscious and not yet in bliss? But if conscious and not in perfect bliss, they *must* be in pain. S. Augustine's belief is explicit on the question of pain; for in allusion to being '*saved, yet so as by fire,*' he says '*that fire is thought lightly of, although the suffering will be more grievous than anything man can undergo in this life*' (In Psal. xxx. 7).

In speaking of an infant who had received the '*sacraments of the Mediator*' (an allusion probably to the Eucharist as well as Baptism), and had died before coming to the age of reason, he says, '*It is not only not fitted for everlasting pains, but it does not suffer even any purgatorial torments (tormenta) after death*' (De Civ. Dei, l. xxi. c. xvi.). He therefore evidently recognised that there were purgatorial torments, as distinguished from everlasting punishment. I may add that he condemns the doctrine of Aërius, which denied the utility of offering an oblation for the dead, declaring that it was superfluous to ask what the Church held on this point, for that '*no one ought to believe the opinion*

of Aërius—no Christian' (Lib. de Hæres.). 'This being transmitted by the Fathers, the universal Church observes—namely, prayer for those who have died in the communion of the Body and Blood of Christ, when they are commemorated at the sacrifice in their proper place' (Serm. clxxii. al. xxxii.).

S. Chrysostom says, 'We implore for the dead that the Lamb Who lies on the altar and takes away the sins of the world will impart to them *some consolation*' (Hom. xli. in 1 Ep. ad Cor.). S. Gregory Nazianzen speaks of a last baptism by fire in *the other life* as 'long and severe, and which burns away all that is evil in those who are thus purified' (Orat. xxxix. in Lumina). S. Clement of Alexandria, alluding to dead sinners who have forsaken their vices before dying, says that 'they must efface *them still by suffering* for their sins committed after baptism' (Stromat. l. vii. c. x.). S. Clement lived in the third century; all the Fathers hitherto referred to flourished before or in the fifth century; but there is a proof of the practice of praying for the dead in order to relieve their pain immediately after death as early as the second century, for in the Acts of S. Perpetua, which are authentic, it is related that having been apprised by a vision that her brother Dinocrates was in suffering after his death, she began to pray for him, and then in another vision she saw that he was in a place of light, and that his affliction was over in consequence of her prayers. S. Perpetua was martyred in 203, and it is evident from the whole tone of the narrative that she was not doing anything unusual in praying for her dead brother, nor had she any doubt that she ought to supplicate God for his release from pain. She clearly practised a devotion which had formed a part of her education in religion. The Acts of SS. Perpetua and

Felicitas were publicly read in the Churches of Africa, and S. Augustine alludes to them in one of his sermons (clxxx.).

That the doctrine of Purgatory was not merely the belief of individual Fathers is evident from the ancient Liturgies. It is a well-known maxim that 'the law of prayer is the law of faith,' and that nothing can prove more certainly the original belief of the Church than the early public Liturgies. Now amongst all the Liturgies of which any record has come down to us, there is *not one*, whether Eastern or Western, in which there are not prayers implying that there are those amongst the dead who are in need of relief, and which embody an express supplication for that specific object. In the Liturgy of S. Chrysostom occurs the following: 'We offer (*i.e.* the sacrifice of the Mass) for the *repose and deliverance* of the soul of Thy servant'—(a blank for the insertion of the name of the departed)—'in order that it may be in a luminous place where there is neither pain nor groaning, and that Thou, O Lord God, mayest make it rest in the place where Thy face shines.' What can be more decisive as a testimony to the Roman dogma than this Oriental prayer? Is it not self-evident that if God is implored to take the soul thus mentioned to a place of light, and where there is *neither pain nor groaning*, that soul is considered to be in a place of darkness, suffering, and captivity? There would be no meaning whatever in 'offering for the repose and deliverance' of the dead, unless the dead so offered for were *not yet* in repose and *not yet* delivered. In the Armenian Liturgy, first composed in the fourth and finished completely in the fifth century, the priest says, 'Remember, O Lord, and be propitious to the souls of the dead; give the dead *rest and light*, and place them with Thy

saints in the kingdom of heaven.' In the Syriac Liturgy we read, 'Bear them *beyond* the horrible abodes of torture, and place them in tabernacles filled with light. Deliver them from gloom and darkness, and snatch them from sorrow and grief.'

## II. COMMEMORATION OF THE SAINTS.

I now proceed to examine an argument against my position which 'Clericus' appears to rely upon as a triumphant refutation. He will find that this giant, which is to carry off with ease the gates of the 'Romish dogma,' will collapse as soon as it is touched with the spear of truth. His argument is as follows: 'Prayers for the dead do not necessarily imply a belief in Purgatory;' and in confirmation of his denial he adduces the Liturgy of S. Chrysostom, just quoted by me, which prays for all departed in 'the faith, patriarchs, apostles, &c., and especially for the holy, immaculate, blessed Theotokos and ever-Virgin Mary. If these prayers for the dead prove that those who compiled and used this Liturgy believed in Purgatory, they also show that patriarchs, apostles, and martyrs, and even the Virgin herself, were believed to be imprisoned in that place of torment; in fact, they prove a little too much.' *They prove a little too much!* 'Clericus' evidently is so satisfied with his victory that his spirits take the genial form of a gentle irony; he will find, indeed, that the liturgical authority does prove *too much*—at all events for him.

That in the Liturgy of S. Chrysostom there is one oblation of the Sacrifice of the Altar for patriarchs, apostles, martyrs, and even for the immaculate ever-Virgin Mary, is perfectly true, and it is equally true,

as I have already shown, that in the same Liturgy there are prayers for repose, light, and deliverance for the dead. There is, however, not the faintest shadow of an inconsistency in the language of the Liturgy. The Liturgy of S. Chrysostom and *all* the other Liturgies recognise *two* classes of the departed: (1) those who are reigning with Christ in glory, and who are of course in no need of assistance from the living; and (2) those who are not yet enjoying the full vision of God, and who are therefore in suffering until that blessed hour arrives. The same adorable Sacrifice of the Altar is offered up by the Church for *both* these classes of the departed, but with an *entirely different object*. The oblation in behalf of patriarchs, apostles, and the Blessed Virgin is an act of exulting commemoration of their glorious memories, of thanksgiving to God for their graces and eternal felicity, and it is also a supplication *that the living may be assisted by their intercession with God*. The same oblation, on the contrary, when it is made for those dead who are not known or believed to be as yet in the enjoyment of heaven, is an act of supplication for their refreshment and entrance from a present state of unrest into one of perfect happiness. Whoever studies the Liturgies, even superficially, will be struck at once with this evident distinction. Generally the saints are mentioned first, and the language used in regard to them is we '*offer for*' or '*commemorate,*' whereas in referring to those who are not yet in heaven, the ordinary phrase is '*we pray for,*' and this prayer often, though not always, occurs in the latter part of the Liturgy.

In no single instance in any Liturgy is there any oblation for apostles and martyrs in which there is the least intimation that *they* are in a state of pain which

can be solaced by prayers upon earth ; whilst in every Liturgy there are prayers indicating that *others* do need the help of their brethren, as being in suffering. That this is no mere theory will be clear from the following indisputable evidence. In the Armenian Liturgy the deacon begins, ' May the holy Mother of God and all the Saints be our intercessors with the heavenly Father ;' and again, ' We pray that in this august Sacrifice *memory be made* of the saints and the cherished ones of God'—(here is a blank for the names of some particular saints)—' prophets, apostles, martyrs, and bishops, *whose feast* we celebrate this day ;' and *later on* follows the prayer by the priest which I have already quoted, ' Give the dead *rest and light*.' S. Cyprian, in the third century, asks for the names of certain holy confessors who have died in their prisons, ' in order that we may celebrate their memories among the memories of the martyrs' (Ep. xxxvii.) ; and whilst using the expression ' we offer sacrifices for the martyrs,' he explains that he means by this phrase offering '*for their memories* ;' in other words, he celebrates their memory by the oblation of the Eucharist.

What can be more distinct than the following language of S. Augustine ? ' The martyrs are recited in that part of the Mass where we *do not pray* for them. But for the other dead who are commemorated we do pray ; to pray for a martyr is to do him a wrong—we ought to ask him to pray for us' (Sermo clix.). So, again, he says that the commemoration of those ' whom we commemorate that they may pray for us, that we may cleave to their footprints,' is not the same thing as that of others who rest in peace (Tract. lxxxiv. in Joan.).

An illustrious authority of the East corroborates

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still further the marked distinction between the two classes of the dead—which I have maintained is recognised in all the Liturgies—and with a force that is irrefragable. The great S. Cyril of Jerusalem, speaking of ‘offering for the prophets, apostles, and martyrs,’ declares that this signifies that we offer for their memories *in order that God may, through their prayers, hear our prayers.* The saints are commemorated first, he says, and ‘*afterwards* we pray for our holy fathers and bishops departed, in short, for all the faithful dead, being persuaded that these prayers which are offered for them when the holy tremendous mystery is placed on the altar, are a very great relief to their souls’ (Catech. Mystag. v.).

Nicolas Cabasilas, who wrote in 1392, makes the following observation on this question: the priest, he says, when in the Mass he is commemorating the other faithful, implores for them *rest*; ‘but in the case of the saints it is quite the contrary, for he does not make intercession for them, but rather makes them into intercessors. But that which, most of all, shows that these words are no prayer or supplication for the saints, but a thanksgiving, is the fact of placing even the Mother of God in this catalogue. For if that company required any intercession, she certainly would not be placed among them—she who is beyond all intercession, not only of an earthly hierarchy, but even of the angels, since she is incomparably holier than those very holy intelligences’ (Exposit. Liturg.).

After the above quotations we can judge of the value of the argument of ‘Clericus,’ who thus reasons; prayers for the dead do not necessarily imply Purgatory, because the ancient Liturgies prayed for apostles, martyrs, and even the B. Virgin, whose souls, how-

ever, could not be supposed to be in torment; therefore the mere *fact* of the early Church praying for the departed, which is admitted to be true, is no proof of belief in Purgatory. If 'Clericus' had said that *not all* prayers for the dead were offered to procure relief from pain, he would have been right, because *some*, namely those offered for the saints in glory, were acts of thanksgiving and commemoration. In the oldest but one of all the Liturgies, the Clementine, the martyrs are commemorated: 'that we may be deemed worthy to share in their combats,' *i.e.* that we may conquer our spiritual enemies as they have done; but *other* prayers are equally to be found in the same Liturgy for others who were dead; and these being addressed to God in order to obtain repose for their souls do 'necessarily imply Purgatory.'

In the Liturgy of S. James, the date of which is placed by Neale as earlier than 200, we find the two classes of prayers most distinctly marked by the language. The Church, when referring to the ordinary dead in this Liturgy, says: 'For the rest of our fathers and brethren that aforetime have fallen asleep, let us all pray fervently, "Lord, have mercy."' Again, 'Give *rest* to these [namely, who from righteous Abel unto this day are of the true faith] . . . in the joy of Paradise, in the bosom of Abraham, and of Isaac and of Jacob, our holy fathers, whence *pain and grief and lamentations have fled.*' Now mark the totally different tone of the Liturgy when referring to the B. Virgin. Here there is no supplication for 'rest,' no 'Lord, have mercy,' but rather a chant of jubilation; 'commemorating our all-holy, pure, most glorious Lady, the Mother of God, Mary ever Virgin, and all the saints that have been well pleasing to Thee since the world began;

let us devote ourselves and one another, and our whole life, to Christ our God.'

Again, 'Verily it is becoming to bless thee, the God-bearing, the ever-blessed, the all-blameless, and Mother of our God, more honourable than the Cherubim, and incomparably more glorious than the Seraphim,' &c.

The Council of Trent enunciates precisely the ancient doctrine, for (1) it says that the Church celebrates Masses in 'the honour of, and to the memory of, the saints, the priest giving thanks for their victories,' as in the Clementine Liturgy, 'and imploring their patronage,' as S. Cyril writes; and (2) it declares that the souls detained in Purgatory are helped by prayers, and especially by the acceptable Sacrament of the Altar (Sess. xxii. c. 2, 3, and Sess. xxv., Decret. de Purgat.).

That there is no substantial antagonism between the Greek and Roman Churches on the doctrine about the dead, whether in Heaven or in Purgatory, is proved by a decisive fact. In the course of time there were several ruptures and reconciliations, but neither in the ninth century in the Photian period, nor in the eleventh under Michael Cerularius, nor at the Council of Lyons in the thirteenth, nor at that of Florence in the fifteenth, was the Greek Church ever required to retract any of its authorised statements about this question. The decree of union at the last Council distinctly affirms that those who were purified in life enter heaven at once, and that those who, not dying in mortal sin, had failed nevertheless to perform sufficient penance during life, are purified after death by the pains of Purgatory; also that they are aided by prayers and the Mass; while those who die in mortal sin go immediately into hell.

To confound both these classes of the dead and both these classes of prayers, in order to concoct out of this confusion a doctrine which shall exclude the 'Romish dogma,' is an example of that polemical necessity which is the mother of so much theological invention; but the sole result is a manufactured theory, which gives no satisfaction to the reason, and dissolves like a vapour before the clear light of the tradition of the universal Church.

THE END.

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